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MY AUDIENCE WITH CHINGGHIS KHAN

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DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:

The long break between my letters is because I have been away in the Ordos. And I've done it at last — the journey to the Sanctuary of Chingghis Khan. Not only that, but I attended the annual celebration, the 'birthday' of Chingghis. The hardest ride I've ever made, and I'm not surprised that no other outsider has ever seen the great *takhiyal* or Sacrifice of Chingghis, though others have seen the sanctuary, at least from the outside. It's bad enough to get there; but to get there *and* get in has taken me years of planning, and a lot of luck at the end, and even then it could n't have been done except for friendship.

David's godfather, the Dilowa Gen, a Living Buddha and the most important personage among the Khalkha exiles from Outer Mongolia, was to go with me, — he used to live in the Ordos, he said, in a previous incarnation, and still has a couple of lama monasteries there, — but at the last moment was n't able to come. He lent

me his car for an essential part of the journey. I had to go up to Mongol headquarters at Pailingmiao, to get credentials; then down to the Yellow River, and then make the ride through the desert. The second night out from Kalgan I got to the Dilowa's camp, in northern Durbet, where I had never been before. You can see in the far distance the plains of Outer Mongolia; and when he is here the Dilowa sits and grieves for Khalkha. Gendung, a big handsome man who has been with the Dilowa since childhood, looked after me here; a sweet-natured man and devoted to David. He served me mutton stew for supper, dished up in a big, white, shiny chamber pot. We sat holding hands all evening, in the gentle Mongol way, for we had not seen each other for about two years, and there was a lot of talk, and I had to go on the next morning, being in a great hurry.

The next day we came down from the north to the great monastery at Shira Muren, the chief monastery of Durbet; then west to Bato Khalagha (Pailingmiao). Luckily for me the man more or less in charge was Prince Gorjorjab of

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East Sunid, a huge hulk of a man and an old friend of mine, who said sure he would give me letters for the Ordos. Another old friend, one of the younger progressives, was temporarily in charge of the secretarial bureau, so he drafted the letters and made them good and powerful. The moment I had them I cleared out southward on the Kueihua road, but trouble with the car delayed us. We spent the night at Arash's camp in sight of the Shiretu Gegen temple.

Arash, my caravan companion of a couple of years ago, had gone down to Kueihua, but Sereji, his girl, looked after us. Kongkhor, their little daughter, roused out at midnight to tote dung for the fire, sat up talking a streak. She always comes for me in an upward dive, landing with her arms around my neck. She had a silly little somersaulting mechanical doll, of which she pretended to be ghastly frightened. A boy of about her own age appeared from some tents near by, and we all sat around in the middle of the night playing with the silly doll. I invented the game of the doll being a lonely pilgrim on foot returning from Wu T'ai Shan, who came to a camp. The two children were the people of the camp. The doll said, very politely in the ceremonial form, 'What is there that is strange and beautiful?' ('What is the news?') and they answered, 'Nothing at all — fair and peaceful.' Then they asked him the same question and at the moment he replied, 'Nothing at all — fair and peaceful,' he would begin 'throwing fits' by turning somersaults. They squawked with joy and excitement. Some pilgrims were staying at Arash's camp, which pleased everybody all the more with the childish game.

The next morning we cleared early, and bucketed down the Onggon Obo pass into Kueihua in good time, and found Arash at Torgny's house. Arash took it as a matter of course that I could n't go without him. Torgny and

I had planned and speculated over this Chingghis journey for years, and once or twice almost attempted it, but never got away because of bandits or something like that. This time my letters gave a better prospect than we had ever had, and also the Ordos was quieter than for years; but Torgny was doubtful about leaving Brita, who was not long out from Sweden. Only at the last moment for catching the train he finally decided to come; the result was that he got aboard dressed in an ordinary town suit, with his wolfskin coat for total luggage; and we found on the train that he had brought neither his passport nor a supply of visiting cards, which are quite as important as a passport.

On the train going the hundred miles to Paot'ou, on the Yellow River, we began to work up the idea of the expedition. It was decided that I should be ignorant of Chinese, and Torgny do all the Chinese talking, while I kept strictly to Mongol. This would provide the explanation for there being two of us, as in the mixed Ordos country both Chinese and Mongol are necessary. We did n't have to plan anything special for Arash; he always ferrets his way through anything.

Because of our shabby appearance — like Torgny, I had only a greatcoat for equipment, and Arash was the same, while films and silver money went in a little sausage-bag that would tuck snugly to a saddle — we went to the most expensive inn when we got off the train, to compensate on the 'face' question. The most expensive inn in a place like Paot'ou is always full of prostitutes, gamblers, drug peddlers, and the scum of the frontier. This meant, of course, coming right under the observation of the crookedest part of the police and detective force.

I had a letter to be delivered to the Paot'ou residence of one of the Ordos princes, commanding him to supply

transport into the Ordos, under terms which would cause me to be passed on from Banner to Banner as an official traveler. We got a rather bad reception. A dilapidated, once magnificent palace. We were kept waiting in a filthy kind of outhouse, inhabited by opium-smoking, ragged soldiers, and finally were told that we could start the next morning. A man would come early to give us our marching orders.

On going back to the inn, there was announced, with elaborate casualness, a 'visitor.' A more obvious police spy I never saw. All the time we were in Paot'ou no uniformed police ever demanded our passports, as they had a perfect right to do. They must have decided that we were pretty suspicious, and therefore not lightly to be interfered with. The spy began to fish for information, and we decided that the best thing was to be frank and open. So we told the exact truth, about wanting to go down to the Ordos to see the Chingghis Khan ceremonies. You could see the disbelief spreading over the spy's face like an unsuccessful sunset. It just confirmed our dubiousness. And we were not interfered with in the slightest.

The next morning some rather mouldy soldiers and a not very hopeful-looking carter turned up. We drove the two or three miles to the Yellow River, and crossed on a ferry, quartering upstream against a turbid current, with the aid of a sail which was really a cloth screen held up on two poles by a lot of yelling men. Everybody who was not yelling was whistling, 'to help the wind.' From the Ordos bank of the river we struck inland a few miles, to the palace of the same prince whose town quarters we had visited the evening before. We saw the petty officials in charge, and with some difficulty transport was arranged for the next day.

When, on the next day, we got

started, we saw that the difficulty was no question of unwillingness, but of the transport itself. My papers gave us the right to *ola (wula)* — that is, transport commandeered in the old Mongol style, by which you take animals, ride them until you come across more animals, drop the old and take on the new. That is all right in rich nomad country, with plenty of riding cattle; but here it was being applied in a desperately poor, settled country, where years and years of banditry and ruthless taxation had cleaned the wretched people out of livestock. On the whole journey we straggled across country from farm to farm, hovel to hovel, and field to field, in search of something to ride. Several times a horse would be taken straight from the plough and ridden for twenty miles — the owner, with no preparation, no food, no bedding, leaving his plough in the furrow and trotting despondently after us. Pretty sickening; but the only way we could have traveled — hired transport would have been an indication that we were not important enough to be accorded official transport, but at the same time rich enough to be worth banditing. Sometimes we managed to pay without our escorts knowing about it, but even this was risky.

I must say we were all pleased when at one place two of our soldiers tried to commandeer a horse from a Mongol who showed a trace of the old Mongol spirit; he cuffed one of our soldiers on the ear, kicked another in the rear, jumped on the horse, and rode off into the sands.

The bandits have been so rife in the Ordos for the past eight or nine years that it has been the worst traveling country in China. The banditry here includes a number of elements; one recent leader was a kind of squire, with broad lands and many hundred tenants of his own, and a kind of fortified city in which he lived. The leader last win-

ter, Yang Hou-hsiao, Yang the Little Wart, was from Torgny's native town of Sarachi. He came of country people who had been dispossessed by tax gatherers. He had at one time attended for a while the school of the mission established by Torgny's parents. As a bandit, he showed a spirit that made him popular with many of the peasantry, who had for years been flayed by soldiers and bandits alike. Ordos banditry had flourished on a tradition of 'herding' the bandits, instead of fighting them. Wherever they appeared, they were hustled and chivied along until they passed into neighboring territory, where the pursuit was dropped until the local forces began it again. Bandits and soldiers were two branches of the same racket; the bandits gave the soldiers opium in trade for ammunition.

Yang Hou-hsiao proclaimed himself the real enemy of soldiers, civil officials, and landlords. Instead of playing the game with the official troops, he killed as many as he could. At the same time he went lightly on the peasants. He developed steadily into the type of bandit who makes the most hopeful material for the initial period of a 'bandit-peasant' uprising, to be followed by communism. Last winter he got to the point where he threatened to establish communication between the Red areas in Shensi Province and Outer Mongolia, by breaking through on the south from the Ordos into Shensi and at the same time breaking through on the north from Inner Mongolia into Outer Mongolia. This at last got the Suiyuan military so scared that they sent out troops against him in earnest, with a lot of artillery and orders not to come back until they had cracked his power wide open. There was something like a real battle near the Yellow River, on the line where Yang was trying to break through Inner Mongolia, and Yang at last was heavily defeated and

his force of several thousand shattered. He himself was driven south into Shensi, and is now said to have been killed. It was this fighting which had broken down the banditry enough to make it possible for us to travel.

Yet peace meant so little that wherever we went the sight of more than two horsemen was enough to send people scattering into the dunes. When traveling at night it was almost impossible to find food or new transport; everything vanished. It is the men who run away — if they have time they take horses and cattle with them. The women and children stay behind, quaking. The bandits can do as they like about the women; a baby suspected of being bandit-begotten is thrown out to die. There was banditry here and there all about us as we rode; the 'unusually peaceful season' meant simply no 'bandit armies' of several hundred or thousand men.

Foreign travelers have naturally not been frequent during these years; most of the people we encountered associated foreigners only with the Belgian Catholic missions. At several places where our papers had to be read to verify our right to transport, I had to read them out myself, as nobody else understood written Mongol. At one such place, where I had just been explaining that Torgny was Swedish and I American, we heard a knowing voice remark in Chinese, on the other side of the paper window of the hut, 'American nothing! They're a couple of educated Tatars [Mongols] who've bought themselves some foreign clothes!'

After several days of drifting around the country practically stealing people's horses, we got down about 130 miles south of the bend of the Yellow River. Here we struck a tiny patch of ground reserved from the all-devastating farmland. Between the two ridges of a shallow valley no ploughed furrows were to

be seen; nothing but the thin grass of the old half-desert Ordos, and a slender stream running from nowhere to nowhere. At one lip of the valley stood an enclosure: the place where the relics of Chingghis are stored through the year. In the flat of the valley was a city of tents, with streets running through it; orderly and parallel from a distance, but jostling and untidy and full of life when you are shouldering through the streets; little stalls everywhere, and dugout restaurants roofed over with thatch and mud; and tent restaurants and booths. In the market there was a spread of cloth, and buckets and pitchforks and saddles and silverware for women's headdresses, and all kinds of extravagances that cost about two cents and last less than two days — an illusion of luxury for a miserable people to give themselves, in the excitement of the market, a brief fancy of spending lots of real cash on exotic luxuries.

Torgny and Arash and the soldiers had to be parked for a while in a crowded round dingy white felt tent, while I went to present my credentials in the tent of the prince who this year is acting as President of the League of the seven Ordos tribes. He was more like an old-style Manchu mandarin, with a touch of the desert and nomad about him, than like the present run of Ordos princes, who are either heroin-smoking young rips or opium-smoking, middle-aged, grasping, peasant-minded squires — landlords writ large into fake aristocrats.

We stayed in the yamen-tent of the Damals of the Darkhat. Of the seven tribes of the Ordos, the Darkhat are those who have charge of the sanctuary of Chingghis, and are repositories of the traditions of the ceremonial followed at the sacrifices. They are divided under twelve Damals, who administer their affairs and supervise the shrine. As Torgny and I had no other

equipment, we spread my coat under the two of us and his over us, and slept huddled together. Arash slept in his own sheepskin.

It was on the day after our arrival that we made our sacrifices; and this business went eminently well, because no crowd came edging round us, the tale having gone out through the encampment that we were Mongols down from Bato Khalagha on a special mission. Thus no one was impelled by curiosity to see what the foreigners were up to, and we went through the ceremonial as naturally as possible.

The sanctuary consists of a tent in which are supposed to be the remains of Chingghis, one in which are kept bows, swords, and saddles, one which is the tent of the Empress, and one which is the tent of a concubine. The tradition that the actual remains are kept here is a strong one, but even so it is confused, some saying that the confined bodies are here, others that only the cremated ashes are preserved, and others that the relics are pictures, painted (or more probably moulded into images) with the ashes. As a matter of fact, Chingghis was taken after his death back to Outer Mongolia, and buried there in a grave whose place was concealed; what is left in the Ordos is a collection of relics; and how many of these are of the actual date of Chingghis is doubtful.

Our sacrifice was one of three sheep. We were paced through the ceremony by five heralds, or masters of ceremonies, two of them being Damals and one a representative of the Chigolgan Darogha or Senior Prince of the League — a special honor. First we were ranged about thirty paces in front of the Tent of Chingghis. Two of our sponsors went forward to the tent to 'announce' us — the procedure is like being received in audience, in some respects, and like a religious sacrifice in others — while the other three remained at hand

to prompt us. As the promptings were all in Mongol, I had to relay them out of the corner of my mouth to Torgny, keeping at the same time a decorous expression on the front elevation of my face.

When the announcers went to the door of the great tent, we fell on both knees. Then we prostrated ourselves three times. Then an attendant gave me a lamp, filled with butter (my position was in the centre, between Torgny and Arash), which I held forehead high; oh, I forgot — we had meantime advanced into the tent, and were now kneeling before the 'altar.' A herald then cried our names, in impromptu alliterative verse, enunciated in a special chant, describing our journey from afar through numerous perils to pay our respects to the mighty and holy Chingghis. Three more prostrations. The officiants then offered incense on our behalf. Three more prostrations.

Then out in front of the tent again, to the thirty-pace distance, where we knelt once more until the attendants came with a goblet of silver, needing all the strength of a man to hold it breast-high. Another attendant dipped from this vessel two small silver cups of *sarhod*, or milk-wine, and placed them on a silver platter in my hands. These I raised forehead-high, while Torgny and Arash each supported one of my elbows (not because I needed it, but to signify that they were participants in the sacrifice) and we advanced again and entered the tent. Here the cups were placed on the altar, and we made three more prostrations, while the herald recited the piety of our offering.

Then we withdrew from the tent once again, and repeated the wine offering; this offering we made altogether six times, each time with three prostrations. After each offering, the wine which had been placed on the altar in the little cups was poured back again into the great vessel; and after the

sixth offering the great vessel itself was brought again to us, as we stood before the tent, and held up to us to drink from in turn, being passed from one to the other until we had finished it.

Once more we entered the tent and knelt, this time for our meat offering, from the sheep of our sacrifice; but this offering was laid before the altar by attendants, not by ourselves. The herald then asked each of us our names, and, as we answered, intoned our virtue as pilgrims. We then prostrated ourselves again, each of us at the same time taking from his breast a silk *khatak*, lifted up in offering with both hands, to be taken from us by an attendant and hung on the altar. Each of us was then given a *janggha* — also a kind of scarf, but different from a *khatak* — and we then rose, moved to the left, and rubbed the *janggha* on the altar chest, which we also touched with our heads in reverence. Moving round to the right, we repeated this, and so completed the ceremonies of the Tent of Chingghis.

The furnishings of this tent were a silver-plated bench of *k'ang*-table shape, which was the altar; behind this a great silver-plated wooden chest; on this a smaller chest, also silver-plated, which was supposed to contain the mummy, bones, ashes or image moulded from ashes, of Chingghis; on this a much smaller chest or box, hanging at the front of it a modern and inferior glass mirror. The round lock plates of the 'coffin' chest were of gold, or gold wash. The silver plating was inscribed; the lettering was not an ancient Mongol, and I had time to make out a reference to the 'Leagues and Banners of Inner and Outer Mongolia,' which proves that the work was of Manchu date. There was a similar inscription on the great wine chalice. At our left, in this tent, was also a spear.

Some years ago I bought from a Chinese dealer, who collects most of

his things in the Ordos, two small wine cups, which I thought at the time might be butter lamps. Both were inscribed; one, as near as I remember, 'presented by the prince of Hagochit [Hochit].' I think the lettering was comparable to the lettering on the silverware I saw at Ejen Horo. As the sanctuary was bandited at least once, it may be that the silver wine cups I have are from the treasure. They are now in the Peabody Museum at Harvard.

From this tent we moved to the south end of the line of four, the Tent of the Bows and Quivers. Here we knelt, facing a kind of throne, across and above which were placed two silver-plated bows; at the left, a pile of four silver-encrusted saddles; below the bows, a sheaf of arrows. One of the saddles had gold, or gold wash, as well as silver on it. At the left of the altar, two swords in one sheath. After presenting a khatak each, we touched our foreheads to the saddles on our left, then moved around to the right and did the same to the bows.

From the door of the Tent of the Bows and Quivers we went, moving clockwise, around behind the tent, then behind the white camels tethered at the back of the Tent of Chingghis, then behind the Tent of the Empress, and so round to the front of the Tent of the Empress. From there we went to the Tent of the Concubine, and then to the left-flank front of the row of tents, to the 'wine cart.' A very ordinary water cart, with ordinary water casks on it, but covered with a rough hooped canopy. On one shaft of the cart a Chinese red-paper New Year good-luck label, reading *jih hsing ch'ien li*, 'a thousand li a day.' This modern water cart, however, symbolizes the ancient cart following the herds of mares, for the making of milk-wine. Some pilgrims put wine, milk, butter, or water on these pegs, or wrap them with khataks.

Then forward, out in front of the

cart. A 'sacred' white horse, said to represent a *huluk* or charger of Chingghis, is led out. We touch our foreheads to the muzzle of this horse, and then bow and duck leftward, thus passing under his neck — obviously once a sign of submission, now of reverence. The behavior of the horse during this bumping and ducking is an omen — if he stands patiently, it is a good sign. Then back, still moving clockwise, around the Tent of Chingghis, to the place where are tethered the two sacred white camels, with twisted soft silk halters of the Imperial yellow. We pluck a tuft of wool from one of them, and the ceremony is closed.

The next day, the twenty-sixth of April, was almost still and windless; one could stand upright out in the open. On this day the sacred tents were 'invited' back to the permanent stockaded sanctuary. The Tent of Chingghis was lifted entire and set on a great two-wheeled cart, drawn by the two sacred white camels. The Tent of the Bows and Quivers was loaded on a similar cart, drawn by horses. While this was going on, many pilgrims crawled reverently under the carts. The most splendid of the silver-decorated saddles was put on one of the sacred white horses; the bridle also was of silver and gold wash. The sacred bows were carried by a rider, hung across his chest, the bowstrings in front and the silver-plated bows across his back. The internal gear from the Tent of the Empress was loaded with the Tent of Chingghis; but this tent itself, and that of the Jungar Khaton, were not moved bodily. They were to be stripped down later and moved like ordinary *ger*, or Mongol felt tents.

We left this day, and had a terrific time getting away. We were to travel in company with the Jahirakchi Taiji of East Hochit, and the young *biteshi*,

or 'scribe,' who had been the official delegates from Bato Khalagha — the Taiji being a descendant of Chingghis. The 'face' accorded in getting to the ceremonies tended to wear out in the scramble of getting away. Every high-ranking visitor was wanting escorts and guides; and the officials wanted guards for themselves on their way home. The tendency was to assign escorts, and then let you worry for yourself. The news had just come in that some bandits who had been taken into the Ordos Mongol troops during the winter had mutinied and gone off on the loose — about sixty of them. That meant that similar mutinies might be starting all over the place. At least half of the troops at the great gathering were also of similar provenance, so assigning escorts was more of a gesture than anything else.

We were allotted four soldiers (all Chinese, not Mongols, and all bandits) and one young Mongol *dahira* or courier — who, thank God, was a fiery young devil. None of us said anything to each other, but we all had the same thought: it was known we were leaving, and plenty of time was being wasted, so that if anyone should slip off to give word to bandits we were easy pickings. We had tipped our escort well on arriving, hoping to hold the men over our stay, so that we could have them again going back; but they had deserted, with their tips, and they might have got in touch with bandits. Also we could n't get our new escort together, and *they* might be casting about to get in touch with bandits. We finally left about three in the afternoon — much too late. We were wide open for anyone to grab. Our Mongol *dahira* had not been able to commandeer a saddle, and he was riding a wild, lashing, unbreakable devil of a horse. He rode like a devil himself. Bracing his hands against the brute's neck to short-rein it and keep it from getting its head down (it wanted to

pig-jump), he ripped the nail clean out of one finger. He did n't flinch, and kept on riding like a wild one.

Two of our escort turned up at the start. One mumbled something about getting his greatcoat, rode off into the crowd, and never came back. We started with one soldier — the *dahira* was n't even armed. The one soldier complained that he was poor, and had n't been paid for months; was he going to get well paid for risking his life with us? It was practically a holdup; we managed to evade him and cajole him and bluff him along with us for some miles; we knew he'd never ride out the day, but we wanted to get him far enough along so that he could n't immediately get into touch with anyone, unless by accident, after deserting us.

The thing was to crowd in as long a ride as possible — to get farther than anyone would count on our getting so late in the afternoon, in order to shake off anybody who might be following us. It was the gray-haired old Jahirakchi, who turned out to be a man of resolution, and the hellion *dahira* who kept us going. The Jahirakchi set the pace, pushing along as if we had good horses instead of shaky commandeered skeletons, and as if we were going to get somewhere definite, pretty soon. The *dahira*, on his wild horse, careered all over the place, managing in some miraculous way to cover both sides of the line of march, looking for fresh horses. When he got one, he drove it along to us, and pretty soon we had almost as many led horses as ridden ones. This was breaking the rules; when you commandeer a horse, you ought to cast the one you are riding. He drove one wild horse up alongside of us, but no one could catch it, as it was unbridled and we had no lasso or lasso pole. Finally the *dahira* galloped up beside it, leaned over, caught it by the mane, drew himself from his horse to the new horse, then slid down, still at full gallop,

along the shoulder of the caught horse, hanging by the mane with one hand and grabbing at the nostrils with the other, to choke it. The finest piece of riding I've seen. The pain of hanging to a horse's mane with one hand, which had the whole nail ripped off one finger, must have been pretty bad.

We held a good pace. As soon as one horse tired, we shifted to a new horse, continuing to lead the tired one; running unriden, it would freshen up to a certain extent and could be ridden again later, at least for a shift of a few miles. Being the heaviest, I rode three horses flat before we finished the thirty miles that we managed to make. The whining soldier finally balked altogether. The dahirah took him like a whirlwind; before the soldier knew what had happened, the dahirah had taken his rifle and his hat (a hat being about all the uniform most of these half-bandit soldiers have). We left the soldier by the road, and kept on. Long before dark there was not a soul to be seen on the road — a bad sign. We were looking for a guide; we should soon be out of country that the dahirah knew, and we had to get somewhere in the dark.

It was already night when we struck a farm settlement; but everybody ran out on us except the women. We did nab one man, but he slipped us. We got a horse at last, and a man appeared to follow the horse and reclaim it when we should cast it. Thus we got a guide, and he finally took us aside from the road, to a small village which had a 'head-man' (who would be some kind of security for us), to stop for the night. We were getting near a town, but the going was uncertain, and even if we had got to the town we should probably have been shot at before getting near enough to explain ourselves. We had by then made thirty miles, in a little less than six hours. It does n't sound like a lot of riding, for Mongolia; but you should have seen the kind of

animals we had to do it on, and the kind of country we were crossing!

The next morning we made a short ride to Tung Sheng Hsien, the Chinese 'town.' It turned out to be a large hollow surrounded by walls. The officials were extremely friendly, but would n't provide us with escort or transport for the next stretch of the journey. This *hsien* or county is a Chinese enclave between two Mongol Banners, and they did n't want to get mixed up in any wild Mongol customs.

Suddenly our wild young Mongol dahirah came in, and opened up on the officials in fluent Chinese. But what Chinese! He learned it from bandits, all right. 'I've been talking to your sons-of-bitches of soldiers out there, and they say that not a — one of them will stir on the road with us. And our — horses are worn out, and there is n't a — donkey in this damned hole, let alone a horse, — its mother.' And lots more of the same. The officials shriveled as if they were being hectored by a bandit, but the wild young Mongol did n't even realize it. He merely thought he was expressing himself in the normal Chinese language. All of these peculiarly foul expressions of the Chinese frontier swearing don't even exist in the Mongol language; many a Mongol does n't know a word of Chinese except these expressions, which he uses when he wants to be more rude than a Mongol should be.

Anyhow, we found ourselves all of a sudden and unexpectedly provided with two Chinese soldiers. The young Mongol, for whom we had all conceived an affection, said he'd go on with us to the next Mongol post. We rode off; and pretty soon we caught up with a caravan carrying coal to Paot'ou. Our two Chinese soldiers immediately decided to rest their horses. Each climbed up on an already overloaded camel and ordered a caravan man to lead his horse for him. We went on and left

them. When we got to the Mongol post, the dahira turned us over to the people there and sat for ten minutes drinking tea, examining the raw end of his finger where the nail had been torn off, and expressing, without a pause, in the filthiest Chinese I've ever heard, opinions on 'the kind of soldiers you find along the roads nowadays.' Then, unbreakable young man, he jumped up and said he'd got to be getting along for home. He thought if he got going right away and kept on slap through the night he'd make it by morning. Off he went, riding one pony and herding eleven — our mounts and remounts, which he was going to return to their pasture; and God, how we missed him!

This post, nominally Mongol, was manned by a troop of bandits who had joined in a body. The soldiers were all taking in opium as fast as they could puff. Nobody wanted to go off and look for horses for us; still less to ride with us. The old Jahirakchi made a bluff at them and dressed them down in Mongol; they refused to understand enough Mongol to talk, but muttered sullenly. Then Oberg turned his wiles on them in Chinese, but did n't make much headway. The two men who did the least indirect swearing at us finally sidled out and made a stab at the job. Some sick-looking horses were produced, and two donkeys; we were to cast the donkeys as soon as we found horses, and the bandit-soldiers said they knew where to find the horses.

We camped that night at the usual terrified farmhouse, hidden up a gully at the side of the road. Rumors of bandits in the general direction of our road for the next day. We had all horses by now, anyhow, and the donkeys were discarded. In fact, we had two stallions — an extremely rare thing, as bandits and soldiers do not like stallions; they yell in the night, and a stallion's call carries an awful distance. Not only

that, but our two stallions were perfectly matched; and not only were they perfectly matched, but each of them was a piebald of by no means easy pattern. Not that these are important details, but somehow they fit this part of the journey, which was all cuckoo.

By noon the next day we got into safe country. We were within the 'home sphere' of the Prince of Dalat. Planted out in a sort of screen at a good distance from his 'palace' are a number of comparatively well-off landlord-farmers. These the prince supplies with arms; and bandits do not like to try to ride through a screen like this, because the sands and the generally difficult going make it easier to bushwhack the bandits than it is for the bandits to pick up a fat landlord. Before getting to the first of these farms, one of our now very friendly men rode ahead; if the whole party of us had showed over the skyline at once, somebody would have begun popping at us, since that's the way they ask questions in this country.

From here it was only eight miles to the Dalat Prince's; we wanted to go on another six miles to a barracks, so as to be nearer to the Yellow River. It was typical of the untamed bandit-soldiers of this country that in the headquarters of the prince who employed them, when asked by the officials who were the prince's personal representatives to take us on another six miles, they refused — and with plenty of lurid language. Not that they disliked us; we were getting on beautifully by now; but they did n't like being ordered around, and besides they wanted to settle down to their opium. So we got another guide and straggled off. That night we slept near the Yellow River: in the morning we crossed the Paot'ou, and by afternoon had reached Kueihua and Torgny's house, and a hot bath.

And that's how I had my imperial audience with Chingghis.

OWEN

THE MEANING OF PRESTIGE¹

BY HAROLD NICOLSON

I

THE title, and subject, of this essay first occurred to me during a recent visit to Central Africa and the Sudan. How comes it, I asked myself, that we rule these dependencies with so modest an exhibition of the apparatus of power? How comes it that a mere handful of Englishmen — rare specks of foam upon a wide dark sea — can impose this habit of obedience upon so many millions? How comes it that, even after a resounding diplomatic defeat, our reputation does not durably decline? How comes it that after the most overt betrayals on our part we are still trusted and even revered? How comes it that our armament programme is nowhere — not even in Italy or Germany — regarded as a menace, and almost everywhere hailed with satisfaction and relief? And how comes it that what we carelessly call 'British prestige' is so different in quality from the various forms of national glory and honor which are worshiped and pursued elsewhere?

The word 'prestige' derives from the Latin verb *praestringere* as generally employed in the phrase *praestringere oculos*, 'to bind or dazzle the eyes.' From this verb comes the even more disreputable substantive *praestigia*, which means nothing more nor less than 'jugglers' tricks.'

Our grandfathers, being more famil-

¹The Rede Lecture delivered before the University of Cambridge on April 23, 1937.—EDITOR

iar with the humanities than we are to-day, were well aware of the low origins of the word 'prestige': *Albion*, wrote Mr. Gladstone in 1878, 'means honour, but never the base-born thing in these last times called prestige.' Freeman was even more explicit. 'Prestige,' he wrote, 'I always like to have a pop at; I take it it has never lost its first meaning of conjuring tricks.' It must be admitted, however, that even in the 'sixties, even by a great scholar, the word could be employed with exactly that eulogistic connotation which we lend it to-day. 'Balliol,' wrote Mark Pattison, 'can set off a prestige of long standing against a deficiency in the stipend.' Obviously, in such a context, there can be no possible suggestion of illusion, trickery, or fraud.

The consideration remains, however, that it is only in the last fifty years that the word 'prestige' has acquired in English-speaking countries the honorable position which it to-day enjoys in our vocabulary and in that of the Dominions and the Colonies. For most Englishmen the word has lost all association with jugglers or conjurers, and has come to mean, as in the definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary: '*Influence or reputation derived from previous character, achievements, or associations; or especially from past success.*'

I emphasize that definition since I

shall use it as a thread upon which to string my argument. That argument will consist of three main questions and of the answers to those questions. My first question will be: 'Does the word "prestige" possess a universal meaning or does the meaning vary in different countries?' My answer to that question will be that not only does the meaning of prestige vary in the several languages, but the general concept also changes in accordance with the political philosophies of the several nations. My second question will be: 'Assuming, therefore, that the meaning of prestige is particular and not universal, what is the interpretation of the word which is particular to the British people?' My answer to that question will be that the particular meaning of prestige in our own philosophy is: 'Power based on reputation rather than reputation based on power.' And my third question will be: 'Is it possible to-day for power based upon reputation to maintain itself against reputation based on power?' And my answer to that question will be: 'It is not possible.'

II

Let me begin with my first question, which bears upon the international, rather than upon the national, meaning of prestige. The word is, as you know, one of those French words which we use in England in a sense different from that in which they are used in France. I admit that in recent years French journalists and political writers have tended to use the word in the English sense rather than in the sense advocated by their own Academicians; and that it would be possible to find even in a reputable French newspaper a phrase such as '*le prestige britannique est fortement engagé*,' which means very much the same as 'British prestige is seriously involved.' Yet if we are rightly to appreciate the associa-

tions possessed by a given word in a foreign language it is desirable to examine the literary rather than the journalistic employment of that word; and in French classical literature the word *prestige*, although not often used, is invariably used with a lively sense of its disreputable origins. Nor is this sense diminished by the chance similarity which it bears to the word for conjurer, *prestidigitateur*.

It is not surprising, therefore, that to the French mind the word *prestige* should sometimes carry with it associations of fraudulence. At its best, it conveys something akin to our own words 'glamour' and 'romance.' At its worst, it suggests the art of the illusionist, if not a deliberate desire to deceive. Thus, when we speak confidently to our French friends of 'maintaining British prestige,' we are apt (as we are so frequently apt) to convey to them a distorted impression of our purposes.

True it is that the word is losing its former values in France even as it is being modified over here. It would be an exaggeration to say that in modern French the word always possesses a disreputable flavor. But it would be correct to say that it carries with it the suggestion, if not of something fraudulent, then certainly of something adventitious. Let me give an illustration. One of the most hackneyed uses of the word occurs in the phrase '*le prestige de son nom*' — as it might be journalistically applied to a descendant of Lafayette attending the centenary of the surrender of Yorktown, or to a descendant of the Duke of Wellington unveiling a war memorial at Quatre Bras. Now in English we should not say on [such an occasion, 'The great-grandson of Lafayette brings with him the prestige of his name'; we should say something like 'the magic glamour of the name of Lafayette.' It is perhaps only a small

difference, but I think that it is a real difference. It implies that even in current journalism our own use of the word is more practical, more political, and far less sentimental than is the French use.

In Italian the substantive *prestigio*, or even more so the adjective *prestigioso*, is still used to describe something dazzling, deceptive, or legendary; and when employing the word to denote the more serious aspects of political reputation the Italians tend to retain it in its French form rather than to use their own Italian word.

In German the word 'prestige' is regarded as a definitely foreign word and, when used, is used in one of three senses. In the first sense it corresponds to the word *Ansehen* or 'esteem.' In the second sense it is akin to that ridiculous German word *der Nimbus*, which again is very close to our word 'glamour.' And in the third sense, I fear, it is used as a variant for the phrase 'national honor.' When a German lays it down that any given problem has become a *Prestige-Frage* he is getting very near to describing it as 'a question of National Honor' — a description which, with its implications of hysterical obstinacy, is apt to fill the gentle souls of our own diplomatists with saddened dismay.

I do not propose to weary you any longer with purely dictionary discussions. I have said enough to indicate that few grammarians would contend that an accepted international meaning of the word 'prestige' can in any way be said to exist. What is interesting and important is not these differences of terminology, but the deeper and wider differences which exist in the general concept. An examination of these differences will show, I think, that the English interpretation of prestige is in fact different from that obtaining in other countries; and that our whole conception of both

'reputation' and 'power' is peculiar to ourselves. I shall now pass from the word 'prestige' to the ideas which that word suggests to different nations.

III

I have already intimated that to the French prestige implies an emotion rather than a method. It is not merely that the word itself possesses associations akin to those of our own word 'glamour'; it is also that the general concept belongs for them rather to the category of feelings than to the category of action or of thought. Emotionally the word is not unrelated to such other words as *la gloire* on the one side and *panache* on the other. I am not implying that such words, and the feelings aroused by them, do not have an important effect upon French policy. I am only suggesting that, whereas we regard prestige almost as a political method, the French regard it mainly as an emotional effect.

It may be contended that in making these distinctions I am splitting terminological hairs. It could be argued, for instance, that the French possess a large colonial empire in which they maintain a high level of obedience without the display of overwhelming force. It could be argued again that the French enjoy a reputation among the nations of the world which is perhaps in excess of their actual physical power. And it might be deduced from these arguments that their policy, as ours, must be based upon some political method which we happen to call 'prestige' but which the French happen to call by other names.

I am aware how dangerous it is to generalize regarding the psychology of other countries, but I do not recognize in the processes or methods of French policy any idea which is identical with what we mean in English by the word 'prestige.' The French possess

a very definite seventeenth-century sense of domination. They are vividly conscious of the importance of French culture and of its vast exportable value. And they are fully aware that power without reputation is a most uncivilized thing. But the point is that by reputation they mean something different from what we mean. For them, reputation is based partly upon the military capacity of the French race and partly upon their magnificent cultural achievements. For us — with our distrust of purely intellectual values and our irritating passion for confusing the ethical with the practical — reputation is based upon character and conduct. The French tendency, in other words, is to render unto Cæsar the things that are God's; whereas our tendency is to render unto God the things that are Cæsar's.

How do these differences affect the concept of prestige? In this way, I think. Whereas the French, with their great gifts of precision, are apt to regard power and reputation as two different things, — the one belonging to the realm of fact and the other to the realm of feeling, — we, with our preference for the imprecise, endeavor to fuse the two into that curious amalgam which we call by the name of 'prestige.'

An even greater difference exists between the British and the German concept of prestige. That tragic lack of self-confidence which is one of the major afflictions of their race inspires Germans with an almost hysterical craving for a national form. 'We are,' writes Friedrich Sieburg, 'shifting sand, yet in every grain there inheres a longing to combine with all the rest into solid, durable stone.' This sense of spiritual loneliness — I might almost say of spiritual forsakenness — lies at the very root of the German character and explains many of its more

perplexing manifestations. It is this which leads the German to seek comfort in the ordered groups of his fellow countrymen and explains why for him militarism is not only a political instrument but an end in itself, bringing him relief from his own uncertainties, and providing him with that sense of outline, solidity, and purpose for which he craves. It is this spiritual loneliness, again, which explains his self-abandonment to the State; his willingness to surrender to the State his freedom, his conscience, and his reasoning powers; and his conception of the State as something superhuman and almost theocratic. It is, again, the tremulous diffidence of the German which leads him to place such confidence in quantitative values, whether in the form of exaggerated erudition or in the form of exaggerated force. And finally it is the German's lack of self-confidence which renders him so sensitive, so suspicious, so impulsive, and at times so reckless.

Inevitably, for a race thus constituted, the concept of prestige is something more tense, more personal, and far less flexible than it is with us. Even as an individual, the German is more prone to take offense than is the Englishman, being more preoccupied than we are by considerations of status. This exaggerated awareness of status often complicates social relations between Germans and their fellow countrymen and renders them self-conscious in their dealings with foreigners. Upon the concept of prestige it has the following important bearing.

The German tends, as I have said, to surrender his own individuality to the State, and he often does so with superb self-sacrifice. But by this act of surrender he identifies himself with the State to a degree which is not conceivable in this country, and he comes to regard the State with the same passionate susceptibility, the same nervous

sense of status, which prove so inconvenient for him in his personal relationships. In this manner his personal honor becomes fused with his national honor, and the resultant form of patriotism is far more inflammable than that old warm blanket which patriotism is with us. Thus the German concept of prestige is very akin to the concept of national honor, and the latter concept is closely identified with the concept of personal honor, which, in its turn, is much concerned with questions of status. And whereas for the Englishman the idea of prestige is impersonal, fluctuating, and elastic, for the German it is something intensely personal, rigid, and tense. I do not think that in our past and present dealings with Germany we have always taken sufficiently generous account of this consideration.

IV

So much for my first question. I hope that I have convinced you that the word 'prestige' has no universal meaning but is differently interpreted in different countries. I now come to my second question, namely: 'What meaning does the word "prestige" possess for the average Englishman?'

It would be agreed, I suppose, that in its widest sense the word is used by us to signify, not glamour or glory, not national honor, but national reputation. In a narrower sense it implies the extent to which subject races and foreign countries are prepared to believe in our power without that power having to be either demonstrated or exercised. I would suggest, however, that these two definitions are neither sufficiently comprehensive nor sufficiently precise. Our conception of prestige, for instance, is closely identified with our conception of policy, and it is the latter conception which I must first examine.

Let me return for a moment to the contrast between England and Germany. The German conception of policy is essentially the heroic or warrior conception. German diplomacy, for instance, is conducted by military rather than by civilian methods. There is the whole apparatus of alternative campaigns carefully elaborated in advance; of wide flanking movements and sudden captures of strategical points; of the *Kraftprobe*, the ambush, and the night attack; of rapid manoeuvre and sudden concentration; of surprises and feints. There is the belief in the importance of initiative and secrecy; the desire to maintain the enemy in a state of anxious uncertainty; the confidence in heavy artillery; and above all the conviction that victory is the only possible alternative to defeat.

The English conception of policy is not in the least military. It is mercantile. We conduct our diplomacy, not as heroic warriors, but as rather timid shopkeepers. Except in rare moments of aberration (the worst of which occurred in 1919) we are not out for spectacular diplomatic victories or sensational trials of strength. What we are after is a profitable deal. And we know from long business experience that no deal is profitable which imposes conditions which are incapable of execution, or leaves our customers devoid of all powers of purchase.

This mercantile conception of policy carries with it an equally mercantile conception of prestige. Thus, for us, the idea of prestige is not so much the exercise of power as the maintenance of our reputation and credit at such a level as will render the exercise of power unnecessary. To that extent it is closely analogous to the general theory of an old-fashioned banking house, under which credit precedes, creates, and maintains power, but does not necessarily derive from it. It is in this sense that, at the outset of this

essay, I gave the English interpretation of prestige as 'power based on reputation rather than reputation based on power.' That definition, although to my mind correct, does not go far enough, since, if we are to understand the particular interpretation given to the word 'prestige' in this country, we must examine what is meant by these words 'reputation' and 'power' and what relation they bear to each other.

I shall begin with reputation. It would be agreed, I take it, that our reputation is based partly upon present wealth and power, partly upon past achievements, and partly upon national character. The question of power will be dealt with later. As regards past achievements, it is necessary to note that many Continental historians — when they consider our long list of defeats, humiliations, and blunders — are inclined to attribute our far-flung success, not to any prowess on our part, but either to some fiendish brand of cunning or to some supernatural fantasy of chance. We are ourselves at moments dimly conscious of our own inability to think things out in advance; yet any uneasiness which might be occasioned by the spectacle of our own mental inertia is quickly allayed by some slogan such as 'muddling through' or 'we always lose every battle except the last.' To the foreigner, however, the extreme cerebral indolence of the British people constitutes the great riddle of the ages. Very few foreigners understand us well enough to realize how deep and sincere is our aversion from thought. We rush into projects quite blindly, prefacing our action with some self-righteous generalization or some indignant denial of what, to clearer heads, is quite obviously and inevitably the very thing that we intend to do. If the project fails, we are accused of treachery. If it succeeds, we are accused of hypocrisy.

Only very few people, even in our own country, realize that in fact we have not the slightest conception of the direction into which our improvisations are bound to lead us.

Thus, although it would be foolish to contend that our past achievements make no contribution at all to the sum of our prestige, yet it is a remarkable and very fortunate fact that this prestige does not rest upon success alone. Again and again have we committed mistakes, or displayed political cowardice, to an extent which would have shaken to its foundations the reputation of any other country. Again and again have we flung our prestige to the four winds, only to find that other nations immediately collect the fragments and restore it to us almost intact. Again and again have we shown ourselves uncertain, unreliable, and timid, and yet we still retain, as never before, the esteem of the vast majority of mankind. What is the explanation of this anomaly? I think that there can be only one explanation — namely, that our prestige is founded not so much upon power or success as upon our national character.

Most Englishmen, I suppose, if asked what were the special virtues of our national character which have given us this solid reputation, would (after a few agonizing moments of embarrassment) answer, 'Justice, Efficiency, and Idealism.' Now a foreigner would disagree with such an answer. He would contend in the first place that our sense of justice is not necessarily in advance of that possessed by other countries. Our claim to efficiency would bring a pitying but not unfriendly smile to his lips. Whereas at the mention of idealism he would become seriously annoyed. Yet if he were a friendly and intelligent foreigner, and one who had studied our history and explored our strange subconscious temperament, he would, I

think, answer the same question somewhat as follows.

First among our virtues he would place honesty. He would mean by that not merely the ordinary everyday honesty of a commercial race, not merely the high standards of our political life, not only a certain general candor, a prevailing habit of truthfulness, but predominantly our constant endeavor to approximate public to private morality. Secondly he would place what he would probably call 'chivalry,' but what I prefer to call 'gentleness.' By that he would mean a constant regard for weaker people, a dislike of bullying, a sympathy with the oppressed, and above all a fine gift of tolerance. Third would come 'objectivity,' by which he would mean no more and no less than our unrivaled capacity for seeing the other person's point of view. And he would conclude his list of virtues with the word 'unity,' meaning thereby not merely our sense of the organic nature of our country, but the curious fact that in most vital issues the majority of Englishmen are apt — or should I say *were* apt? — to think alike.

This list of amiable virtues does, I think, describe those aspects of the British character which are most esteemed abroad and on which our reputation, and therefore our prestige, are based. It should be noted, however, that there are other countries, and notably Switzerland and Sweden, which possess these very virtues to an even greater degree and yet whose prestige is not comparable with our own. It might be contended that the reason for this disparity is that the virtues of gentleness, honesty, and objectivity shine with a richer lustre when combined with immense wealth and power. But it might also be contended that the reason why Switzerland and Sweden do not possess prestige comparable with that of the British

Empire is that prestige is not a question of virtue but of guns. The truth, I think, lies somewhere between these two contentions. The moral reputation of Sweden or Switzerland stands, I should suppose, even higher than our own; yet their prestige is lower than ours, not because they lack guns, but because this deficiency prevents them from rendering their virtues internationally effective. Which consideration brings me to my last question — namely, the problem of power.

V

At the outset of this essay I suggested that for the average Englishman the meaning of prestige was 'power based on reputation rather than reputation based on power.' In my last section I examined the nature of reputation and concluded that our own reputation was mainly founded upon national character. It remains for me to consider the nature of power, and the proportions in which it must be mixed with reputation if they are both to create prestige.

The cynic at this stage will exclaim: 'But you are raising a false issue. It is obvious, and Hitler and Mussolini have proved it, that prestige is based upon power alone. However high may be your reputation, unless you also possess power you have no prestige. Conversely, however low your reputation may be, so long as you have sufficient power, then prestige follows inevitably. In fact "power" and "prestige" are synonymous terms.'

The answer to that assertion is that 'power' and 'prestige' are *not* synonymous, since, although you cannot *acquire* prestige without power, yet you cannot *retain* prestige without reputation. Moreover, a prestige which contains a high percentage of reputation is able to withstand a loss of power; whereas even a temporary decline in

power will destroy a prestige which is devoid of reputation. For instance, at the time of the Abyssinian episode, we exposed to the world a flagrant decline in our power, yet our prestige (much to our surprise) remained almost undamaged; whereas it is inconceivable that any State whose prestige was based on power alone could have survived a similar discomfiture. Again, we maintain our rule over subject peoples not by the employment of power so much as by the general confidence inspired by reputation. The problem is not, therefore, one of power alone; it is a problem of the proportions in which power and reputation should be mixed.

Power, for our present purposes, may be regarded as of two kinds — namely, offensive and defensive. Until quite recently the defensive power of Great Britain was immense, and when we are tempted to become self-righteous about our virtues it is as well to remember that it was our invulnerability which allowed those virtues to develop. Our unchallenged security during the course of the nineteenth century enabled us to build up our Empire and to create our prestige with a minimum expenditure of force. Yet to contend that we acquired our Empire merely by the exercise of our more agreeable qualities would be to advance a contention which is untrue. Our fathers, with their long habit of security, were frequently unjust in condemning the militarism of other countries when our own navalism was as excessive as it could be. Nor is it accurate to quote the low figures of our standing army as proof that our Empire and our prestige were both acquired without the use of force. Our potential power was, owing to our unassailability, immeasurable. But that is not the point. The point is that we exercised that power with very careful regard for our reputation.

Take, for instance, the end of the Napoleonic Wars, when our prestige and potency were at their height. Although at that time we might have acquired half the world, we were content with a quite modest booty. We abandoned Martinique, Senegal, and Gambia to our former enemy; and we gave the East Indian islands to somebody else. Nor were these surrenders dictated by lassitude or repletion. They were deliberately made in order to increase our reputation and thus to cement our prestige with something deeper and more durable than power alone. 'I am sure,' wrote Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool, 'I am sure our reputation on the Continent, as a feature of strength, power, and confidence, is of more real moment to us than any such acquisitions which might be made.' It is unfortunate that a similar regard for reputation did not guide our counsels in 1919.

Let me take another and more recent instance. On January 1, 1907, Sir Eyre Crowe, at that time head of the Western Department of the Foreign Office, wrote a memorandum regarding the foundations of British policy. In that memorandum he laid it down as an axiom that we must maintain the mastery of the seas against any possible enemy. Yet he added an important corollary. He pointed out that this maritime supremacy would, if abused, arouse feelings of resentment and jealousy throughout the world. Our power, he said, must therefore be exercised with the utmost benevolence and with the minimum of provocation. Our policy must 'be closely identified with the primary and vital interests of a majority of other nations.' What were those primary interests? The first was independence and the second was trade. Sir Eyre Crowe therefore laid it down that British policy must maintain free trade and must at the same time display 'a direct and positive'

interest in the independence of small nations. Does that wise and generous tradition still maintain among us? I fear that it has suffered a decline.

I have cited these two instances in order to show that even when in possession of unchallengeable power we were sufficiently sensible to realize that power, without reputation, is not enough. We are now no longer possessed of unchallengeable power. Our defensive power has rapidly, I might almost say suddenly, diminished, whereas the offensive power of other nations has correspondingly increased. We have been able, because of our reputation, to maintain our prestige in spite of the humiliations which we have undergone. Yet it would be folly to suppose that we shall continue to maintain it by the force of reputation alone; and all reasonable people will agree that the proportion of power in our prestige must rapidly and largely be augmented.

We shall not fall, I trust, into the opposite extreme and forget, once we have again achieved great power, that power is not enough. I earnestly hope that, with mounting armaments, we shall be more scrupulous than ever to maintain our reputation. I described that reputation as being based, above

all, upon our national character. Is there no danger lest that character may also decline?

For why was it that we, during all those years of supremacy, were gentle, tolerant, and kind? Why was it that we, more than any other nation, were able to achieve some approximation between public and private morality? Why was it that we were always ready to defy the powerful and to protect the weak? I have not that complacency which would lead me to believe that our people are possessed of nobler virtues than are other peoples. We could afford the luxury of gentleness because we were completely unafraid. Now that we have lost our sense of security, shall we always maintain our good humor or our objectivity? Will even our honesty, our candor, and our truthfulness remain undimmed? And are we sure, even, that our unity is certain to survive the clash of economic religions? If we are alert and determined, these great blessings will each one of them be preserved. Yet if we forfeit them, then (however great may be our physical power, however thunderous our guns) British prestige will perish from the earth; and mankind will thereby lose one of the last citadels of tolerance, of gentleness, and of reason.

REMEMBRANCE OF MARTINIQUE

BY WILLIAM MAXWELL

THE air all about them was green, soft, heavy with odors, and lifeless. Clouds passing over the bay toward Dominica lost their color and stopped moving. The sky was rigid. Young Andrews folded the extra coat across his arm and sat down on the end of the pier. Alin looked down at his own trousers, which were of faded blue cotton not likely to suffer any damage; then at young Andrews's white linen suit. He swore softly.

They had chosen the smaller pier because a coastal steamer, the *Gouverneur Moutet*, was tying up to the larger one. The smoke from her funnel was black and full of cinders. A bell clanged. People began to move in dark procession across the evening — women from St. Pierre walking cleanly with baskets on their heads, men with coconuts and bunches of bananas. Young Andrews was as little concerned with them as he was with his white linen trousers. What mattered was the coat; he wanted to give Alin his blue coat.

Alin had no coat of his own — nothing but a cotton jacket, and in place of a shirt the scrap of *madras* folded smartly around his bare neck.

At night after young Andrews had finished his dinner at the Pension Gallia he would cross over into the *savane* where Alin was waiting for him, sometimes on a bench, sometimes walking up and down. From then until bedtime they would talk — young Andrews in bad French, Alin in broken English.

Young Andrews was homesick and spoke of Wisconsin night after night; of tamarack swamps, of the bend in the slough where deer came down to drink in the evening, of carp dozing in the creek, of the quail. Alin retaliated with the pleasant horrors of French Guiana — the earth cracking open, the six months' rain, the *fer-de-lance* that whistled. When Alin was well they spent their evenings in this way. But once in a while Alin would not be waiting at the edge of the *savane*, and young Andrews would find him with his face buried in the cool grass. It was the malarial fever, burning inside his skull, in the marrow of his bones. When young Andrews came and stood over him he would sit up, dizzy with pain, and say, 'I want dead. . . .'

For the fever and for the chill which followed the fever there was no remedy except quinine, which Alin could n't afford. But if he had a decent coat, young Andrews said to himself, at least he could keep out the dampness which settled upon the island of Martinique as soon as the sun went down.

'*Mon vieux*,' Alin began, in a tone which implied that it was a great pity anyone could afford to wear white trousers and still not have sense enough to take care of them; '*mon vieux*,' he said disparagingly, '*vous êtes poète*.' Then he sat down and lay back, full length and completely relaxed, on the pier.

For no particular reason young Andrews was hesitant about offering the coat. Alin was too proud to be touchy, and too amiable. His attitude toward the world, or rather toward the world of Martinique, was always a mild disparagement. It did not seem strange to him, or extremely reprehensible, that dogs should couple on the main bridge over the canal, or that people should lean out of windows to encourage the dogs; that sailors should step drunkenly in and out of the open sewer which ran down either side of the street; that schoolboys should play soccer on every side of the marble Empress Josephine; that the more respectable citizens of Fort-de-France should promenade every night of their island lives over the same two blocks of pavement. It was Martinique, that was all. There was nothing remarkable about Martinique.

In the more sober, gray eyes of young Andrews, Martinique was remarkable, and for one thing particularly: in Martinique Negroes did n't know their place. It was that which distinguished the island from the United States, more than palm trees and still, painted forests and rivers dropping precipitously to the sea; more even than saffron clouds and inaccessible mountains and the green air at evening. So far as young Andrews could make out after a month in Fort-de-France, it had never occurred to the people of Martinique that they could not help it because they were Negroes. They walked with their heads high; partly to carry bundles, of course, but also because it came natural to them. They looked at him curiously sometimes — there were only three Americans on the island, and *tout le monde* knew how many times the unscrupulous American Government had tried to buy this island daughter of France — but never with deference. And how, therefore, should he give Alin the blue coat?

In America young Andrews would have known exactly how to go about it. 'Here's a coat for you,' he would have said to old Dyer, who kept the lawn and the garden in order, and did the heavier housework for his mother. 'If it does n't fit you give it to somebody,' he would have said. And old Dyer would have taken the coat. In America that was all there was to it. Old Dyer was a good nigger and he knew his place. But it was doubtful whether Alin who sat beside him — not at the same table, to be sure, but on the end of the same pier and dangling his legs over the same water — would have kept in his place even if he had learned by one accident or another that he had one.

One afternoon during carnival young Andrews had wandered along the malodorous canal listening to the music from the dingy buildings where the less respectable citizens of Fort-de-France had gathered to dance the *biguine*. He had been to dance pavilions in Wisconsin, but they were in no way comparable to this — the stale heat, the rasping monotonous music, the dancers separating and coming together again in a rhythm that involved feet, hips, thighs, solar plexus, possibly the navel — all with the blandest, most disinterested expression on their dark faces. To get a better view, young Andrews crossed the street and found himself surrounded by a howling half-naked *bande de malpropres*. They wanted money, and he had left the *pension* without a sou. In that moment of extreme need, unaccountably and out of nowhere Alin appeared to rescue him. That was three weeks ago, and now between them — one mulatto, the other white — there was an easy feeling, a deep acceptance of each other which young Andrews knew that he could not explain when he got back to Wisconsin.

'Here,' he said suddenly, 'present for you, Alin — *un cadeau*.'

Now that he had said the words he wondered what had been troubling him. It was perfectly simple, after all, except that he could have wished that Alin's eyes had not grown soft with wonder; and that he had taken the coat casually instead of holding it in his two hands as if it might break.

'*Pas un cadeau,*' Alin said at last; and then, shyly, '*Un souvenir!*'

Young Andrews had not thought of it in that way. What he wanted was to give Alin a coat. He had two coats and Alin did n't have any. It seemed better, therefore, that Alin should have one of them, so that he could keep warm. That was what he had in mind. But he saw now that he should never have put the forty-franc note in the pocket. It was not very much, but it would buy some quinine, and in America it would have been all right. Only that Alin was going to wear the coat, he said, when he was gone, in remembrance of him. Young Andrews turned, hoping to take back his coat before it was too late.

Alin was standing above him with his feet spread apart. The lights of the town shone between his legs and the mountains were luminous behind him. He slipped his arms into the sleeves

proudly, as if there were no earthly limit to his pleasure. He put his hands against his sides. He ran his fingers along the edges of the lapels, drawing them closer across his bare chest. Rather than look at him, at his dark kind sensitive face, young Andrews stared past him at the town and the three pointed mountains above the town. The bell clanged, more faintly than before.

'*Mon vieux . . . est-ce que vous avez fait une faute?*'

It had happened now. Young Andrews knew without looking that it had happened. And something told him that as long as he lived he would remember the shape and position of those three mountains. '*Pas de faute, Alin,*' he said; and when one moment and another passed with nothing but silence between them, '*C'est pour la quinine.*'

But Alin had already taken the coat off and put the franc note back in the pocket. '*Je suis très obligé,*' he said with dignity, and laid the coat folded across young Andrews's knees.

When young Andrews looked up he was not there any longer. The pier was deserted. Clouds were moving over the bay toward Dominica. And the brightness was gone from the air.

PROBES

BY LAIRD BELL

I

WHEN the battle lines were being drawn in the recent automobile strike, Mr. John L. Lewis unlimbered his batteries with an announcement that he would ask a Congressional inquiry into General Motors. It was to investigate the financial setup of the company, what salaries were paid to the chief executives, whether the company was under the remote control of the du Pont family, and to what extent its policies were dictated by British and French interests.

At about the same time one of the Washington weekly news services reported laconically: 'Labor "spy" inquiries by La Follette Senate Committee will be used to embarrass General Motors and other corporations having serious labor disputes.'

These manœuvres raise some interesting questions. The bland assumption that a legislative investigation, if it could be obtained, — as to which Mr. Lewis apparently felt no misgivings, — was an available weapon may well inspire some inquiry into the uses and purposes of this familiar governmental device.

A legislative investigation is neither strictly legislative nor judicial, but it enjoys the full authority of the legislature and some of the major prerogatives of the courts. The investigating body may compel witnesses to attend and to give testimony, and it may punish the recalcitrant by jail sentence. What we

commonly consider the constitutional rights of a witness or a defendant do not exist. And the field within which the investigator thus armed may roam has few practical limits.

This field, in the earliest appearances of the legislative investigation, was chiefly in the domain of election contests. Before the Pilgrim Fathers sailed, Parliament was appointing committees to investigate and report upon election contests. Parliament likewise assumed jurisdiction to create committees to investigate executive departments. As the holder of the purse strings, it conceived, reasonably enough, that it had a right to know how and for what purposes moneys were being spent.

Reasons were early found for still further extending the scope of the legislative inquiry. It was clear that legislative bodies should acquire proper information before legislating — in theory, at least. At an early day, therefore, committees of Parliament were appointed for all manner of inquiries, many of which have a familiar ring. They were appointed 'for the Examination of the Merchants' Business' in London; to investigate navigation on the River Wye; 'to inspect the several Accompts of the Officers of the Navy, Ordnance and Stores'; and, as early as 1689, to investigate 'the conduct of the war' — the particular one that was going on at the moment in Ireland.

Our legislatures were not slow to take advantage of these principles. Probing was common even in colonial times. After the Federal Constitution was adopted, Congress followed suit. Investigations into its own family affairs, such as the election of Representatives and the alleged bribery of members, have been common. Investigation of executive departments was popular from an early date. Despite the supposed separation, under the Constitution, of the powers of the executive and legislative departments, each has always tried by some means to dominate the other. In Parliament, control over the executive is automatic, through its power to overthrow the government of the day. In Congress, more indirect means have proved necessary. Legislative investigation of a department, theoretically to ascertain how appropriated funds were being spent, has proved a handy device to this end.

These internal governmental activities have had only a minor interest for citizens not actively engaged in the politics. They are accepted as part of the game. What concerns citizens more acutely is the investigation ostensibly aimed at procuring facts as a basis for legislation. Of the propriety and utility of a factual inquiry of this type there can be no question. Increasingly Congress must legislate on complex and delicate questions. Obviously few legislators enter the Capitol fully equipped with information on any large part of the fields in which they must make law — taxation, tariffs, banking, transportation, river improvements, pensions, forestry, patents, Indians, foreign relations, chain stores, not to mention the economic legislation of recent years. If legislation is to be based on anything but inspiration or political catchwords — or unless the executive is to do the thinking for the legislative branch — a basis of fact must be laid. Clearly the only practical approach to that must be

investigation by selected groups from the houses. And many genuine contributions have been made by such groups.

The group may be from the houses themselves, it may be composed of outside experts, or it may be both. Particularly valuable contributions have been made by groups composed in part, at least, of outsiders. Probably a more objective and detached study of a given problem can be made by those not under the pressure and vexation of a legislator's life. Royal Commissions in England have produced state papers of the highest worth. Similar laymen's bodies in this country have been fruitful of results, though too often their reports have benefited few others than the Government Printer. While perhaps less outstanding, many reports of committees of the legislators themselves have been of very real value. As a governmental device there can be no question of the value of the committee investigation.

It is the abuse rather than the use of the device that is disturbing. When the power of inquiry passes beyond fact gathering, and its collateral uses are exploited, the possibilities give one pause. It is a high-powered machine, practically unlimited by constitutional restraint or by custom, in either scope or method. In reckless hands it can do real damage.

Of its scope the oft-quoted Lord Coleridge once said that the inquisitorial power of Parliament extends to 'everything which it concerns the public weal for them to know, and they themselves, I think, are entrusted with the determination of what falls within that category.'

II

Congress has not been slow to recognize its interest in everything that concerns the public weal and to take upon itself the determination of the category. The excursions of the last

twelve Congresses make interesting reading. Nearly three hundred such investigations were authorized. Some were genuine efforts to get at facts. Some were obviously convenient methods of postponing action on embarrassing matters. Some seem merely to have provided pleasant opportunities for travel. Others appear to have had purposes rather remotely connected with the gathering of information necessary to legislation. The largest single category comprised investigations of administrative bureaus. Agricultural matters were a perennial object of solicitude. The legislators seem to have been peculiarly curious about lobbies. Their curiosity was manifested by some form of probe in nearly every session, although it would seem that formal inquiry might yield less information than their own day-to-day observations.

Some minor items of interest appear from time to time. Senatorial concern seems to have been felt, for some reason, about irregular delivery of the *Congressional Record*, although it is not clear whether irregularity was deemed good or bad. Investigation was authorized into 'alleged socialistic propaganda emanating from the employees of the Federal Trade Commission.' The patriotic societies will be concerned to learn that these emanations were as early as 1919. The lower house in 1927 risked the appointment of a committee on the abolishment of useless offices, but surprisingly no hearings appear to have been held or report filed. An investigation more prolific of hearings was that of the Senate into 'appropriate methods for replacement and conservation of wild animal life,' during which personal visits to wide sections of the central and extreme West were evidently necessary. The appropriation for this purpose was \$45,000. Three years later a select committee of the House found it necessary to investigate 'all matters pertaining to the replace-

ment and conservation of wild animal life,' but though its findings actually resulted in the treaty with Mexico for the protection of migratory birds, the investigation cost very much less. Representatives can apparently travel more cheaply than Senators.

These items are, of course, merely curiosities. But the more serious Congressional efforts will bear some study. When the Seventy-Fourth Congress recessed in the summer of 1935, it left fifteen major inquiries to brighten up the summer. Curiosity about lobbies persisted, including by now a 'super-lobby.' A survey was to be made of 'all land and water policies of the executive and other agencies of the government' — a reasonably comprehensive field. Inevitably the international bankers were included, this time under the eye of the Munitions Committee headed by Senator Nye. When the session finally closed last summer and Congressmen settled down to the serious business of reelection, the Senators did not wholly relax their fact-gathering efforts. The machinery was kept at work preparing for at least three promising probes. Senator Wheeler proposed to explore the field of railway financing, with particular attention to the much-publicized Van Sweringen Empire. Senator Lonergan was preparing to keep an eye on private (not public) campaign expenditures. And Senator La Follette was getting ready to investigate strike breaking. The Senate's appetite for facts would permit no vacation. All these subjects coincidentally seemed likely to become acute topics of interest in the succeeding months, and perhaps Mr. Lewis was justified in assuming that he need only call for a committee when he needed one.

The House was not entirely idle. The Sabbath Select Committee to Investigate Real Estate Bondholders' Reorganizations was traveling like a football squad on behalf of real estate

bondholders. The typical real estate bondholder has been a small investor, undoubtedly imposed upon, little able to help himself, and easily convinced that somebody must be to blame for the collapse of real estate values from which he is suffering — a fertile field for arousing both sympathy and prejudice. Perhaps, therefore, the committee is not to be blamed for having lost sight of the theory and philosophy of legislative investigation. In the search for light on how to legislate, it circularized bondholders offering to procure counsel to press fraud claims, on a contingent basis. It had its own counsel appear and object to reorganizations of distressed properties. When some judges professed inability to see why such counsel should appear in their courts without clients, the committee returned to the House and the House extended the committee's powers so as expressly to include such appearances, for the purpose of objecting to reorganizations, with especial mention of fees, whenever the committee felt proper. The House seems to have overlooked the tenuous connection between procuring evidence for legislation and presenting evidence in litigation.

The lead of the Federal legislature has been enthusiastically taken up by the state bodies. Congress has felt little enough restraint, but the state legislatures have been still less troubled by the dictates of dignity or any undue feeling that motives should be kept on a high legislative plane. For example, during the construction of the Century of Progress in Chicago, while its administrative officers were straining every nerve to make each dollar do its work, a joint commission of the Illinois Senate and House members organized an inquiry into the ever-interesting topic of jobs, this time at the exposition. A Senator was quoted in the press as saying at the hearing, 'I have yet to find one member of the legislature who

has got a job at the Fair, and that does n't set so well.' It is a rare daily paper that does not record the activities of some state legislative committee engaged in a new and passionate search for facts.

III

With the ever-spreading field of government activity, imagination falters before the possible future interpretation of 'that which it concerns the public weal for the legislature to know.' This absence of boundaries might not be so frightening, however, if it were not for the methods which have grown up in the conduct of the inquiry. This is perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the matter.

The legislative committee bent on getting facts is armed with the weapons of a court but recognizes none of a court's limitations. Its power to summon witnesses, including often a witness who is the object of the investigation and therefore virtually a defendant, and the power to punish a witness for refusal to answer, are essentially judicial powers. But while the legislature dresses its agents in judicial ermine, the agents know nothing of the restraint and impartial judgment that the ermine is presumed to clothe.

The trial of issues of fact in any tribunal under what we call our Anglo-Saxon system has immemorially been under certain rules of fair play. Fundamental among these have been that no man should sit in judgment on his own case, that the person accused should have the right to confront his accusers, to answer them and cross-examine their witnesses, and to bring forward his own side of the matter. None of these elementary rules of the game is observed in the legislative investigation. A court hears both sides of a controversy. When the legislature starts an investigation, there are, in theory, no sides. In theory this is correct enough; when the

investigating body has heard enough to be satisfied on the facts, the fate of the unfortunate object of the investigation is of no concern to the legislator. But in real life it is otherwise. Granted that the busy statesmen should not be burdened with the bickerings and obfuscation that all too often mar our judicial trials of fact; it still remains true that truths half brought out are not whole truths. And, to descend somewhat from the abstract, it is equally clear that the investigator who starts with an opinion cannot fully be trusted to bring forth the unpleasant facts as well as the pleasant. Call them what we like, most investigations attack somebody directly; many others damage somebody in passing on to their objectives, and the damage may be greater than the object attained. Too many investigations are truly prosecutions. The prosecutor is the legislature. The legislature is also judge and jury.

It is no real answer to say that the legislative finding sends nobody to jail. The defendant is condemned by public opinion, and may be damaged in that regard more deeply than by fine or sentence. The gossip is aired, the half-truth is headlined, the explanation or justification is unheard. The damage is done, and the absence of bailiff or warden from the scene is poor consolation to the victim.

Visualize, if you please, the ordinary probe. After appropriate advance publicity to ensure a good house and a good press, the legislators gather. Accommodations are provided for the press, and, if space permits, the witnesses subpoenaed may also find chairs. No need to supply space for the photographers; they are licensed to climb over everyone. A continuous barrage of flashlights is laid down. In the midst of the hurly-burly a witness is produced. He may be a witness or he may be really a defendant, himself the object of the investigation. In neither capacity has

he any rights. Statesmen are seeking light, and the witness's personal concerns must give way to the majesty of the occasion.

There is no direct examination. All is cross-examination. All members of the committee may ask the questions, one after another or simultaneously. According to his mood, a member may lead, badger, and confuse the witness at his will. In the more highly organized inquiries, there may be an inquisitor for the committee, but this does not restrain the individual initiative of the members. In what became known as the Pecora investigation of banking, Mr. Pecora directed the course of the investigation, but accompanied by an obligato of senatorial inquiry. One of the more resonant instruments in the orchestra was Senator Huey P. Long. A member of the 'House of Morgan' was on the stand, and according to press reports was invited to hold his own in the following colloquy:—

Senator Long: 'Did it ever so happen about the time this hearing was started that you read anything in regard to a statement by me upon the floor of the Senate, to the effect that the Treasury Department ought not to be dominated by a man who came from or was affiliated with the House of Morgan?'

Mr. Lamont: 'It is very possible that I did.'

Senator Long: 'Do you remember about how long it would have been, that you remember, if you do remember it, from possibly having read such things, before this investigation commenced?'

Mr. Lamont: 'Well, Senator, I should not have recalled it for very long, because such a statement, if ever made, would not have made the slightest impression upon me.'

Senator Long: 'Then a statement made by a member of the United States Senate naturally made no impression on you?'

Mr. Lamont: 'Any statement made by a Senator of the United States that was founded on anything approaching the facts would of course. . . .'

And later:

Senator Long: 'Now *Collier's* has had some articles published by you, has n't it?' Mr. Lamont replied in the affirmative.

Senator Long: 'Do you know of any reason why *Collier's Weekly* was making the pronouncement that it was going to fight Huey P. Long and was sending to every member of Congress a previously printed document that was to appear in *Collier's Weekly*, supposedly to make a great exposure of Huey P. Long, after that speech that the Treasury Department of the United States should be ousted from the House of Morgan?'

Members of the 'House of Morgan' have had a long training in the witness chair, but less experienced witnesses may well be disturbed by the thought that their answers to such questions make history.

In the midst of such welter and confusion, the witness is entitled to no protection from his own counsel, whether or not he be the object of the inquiry. In some instances counsel has been permitted as a matter of grace to speak occasionally. He has, however, no right to object to the character of a question or its pertinency. Few men are at home in the witness chair, and under the glare of publicity and the general circus atmosphere it is easy for witnesses to misspeak themselves or leave false impressions. Counsel has no right to take even a helpful part in the affair. Under the ordinary common-law procedure, after a witness has been subjected to cross-examination his own counsel may mop up, correct mistakes, bring out facts suppressed or overlooked. In a legislative inquiry, although the whole proceeding may have been a hostile cross-examination, no such right exists. If there is any substance to the theory that the legislature is inquiring into facts, such mopping up should be not only permitted but encouraged.

The traditional oath administered to the witness requires him to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. In practice the legisla-

tive inquiry forgets two thirds of this formula. Both the truth and the whole truth require a fair presentation of the whole case. Where a witness is asked only those questions which the inquisitor chooses to put and is denied the right to bring into the record the whole case, the intent of the inquiry is not served. In the post-Johnson period of the NRA, the then Administrator, Clay Williams, was being examined by a Senate committee. Senator Couzens asked him if he approved the principle that a man must get the approval of the government before going into business. 'It is a rotten principle,' Mr. Williams said, 'but . . .' There the Senator cut him off, saying that he had heard criticism of Williams as a witness for qualifying all answers. Congress is thus enabled to legislate with the knowledge that the Administrator regarded one principle of NRA as rotten with certain qualifications; but Congress was not to know the qualifications.

IV

The up-to-date probe is no amateur or impromptu affair in spite of its occasionally having the appearance of being a senatorial field day. It is a serious business enterprise. It may be fortified by a force of investigators and accountants who swarm in upon the concern which is the unfortunate object of its attention, take possession of its books and records, and settle down for months of insistent questioning. A partner of J. P. Morgan and Company recently stated in a hearing that for more than eleven months six or seven investigators of the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce had been working on the firm's files and had examined more than 450,000 memoranda and other documents.

There may be no legal warrant for this invasion, but the citizenry is learning that, particularly if there is nothing

really to conceal, it is better to let the investigators in, with all the risks of partial and unfair disclosure. A Senator, chairman of a leading committee, in a magazine article recently told with evident relish how easy it had been to bring even the reluctant to the mark by the simple expedient of exercising the committee's power to issue a subpoena requiring that some truckloads of records be brought to Washington instantaneously. And the recent manoeuvre of having a Federal commission order the telegraph companies to turn over, unknown to the persons investigated, private messages for the eager combing of the investigators is too fresh in mind to require more than mention.

After some months of such examination, a public hearing may be held. The inquisitor is armed with statements made up by his own staff, with its own interpretation of the material. Only as a favor may the supposed owner of the records learn what these statements purport to show before they are published to the world. The investigator's findings may vary in accordance with his taste for the dramatic. Once given out, they become current history. Similarly in the sifting of the records an investigator may cull out careless or ill-considered letters, isolated bits of office memoranda, criticism by one officer of the judgment of others, and the like. Since these are published as admissions of the culprit's own officers, undue weight is attached to them. If by grace the examining committee permits explanation, it is apt to be too late. To-day's headlines are seldom overtaken by to-morrow's explanation.

The press, of course, is partly responsible. But it is no answer to blame the press. The reporters do not make the news. If committee members exploring a field of current public interest give out what they delight to term 'disclosures,' the papers can but report the fact. In default of good disclo-

tures, committee members have been suspected of keeping public interest alive by timely but vague 'charges.'

Some committees have developed showmanship to a high degree. After a build-up of promised disclosures and interesting charges, a real hippodrome is called for. Of course the first step should be to find an excuse for calling Mr. J. P. Morgan. The all-time high may have been reached when the midget climbed into Mr. Morgan's lap; but this may be unduly depreciatory of the ingenuity of future solons. Not every committee is fortunate enough to be able to offer Mr. Morgan as a feature; rival attractions must be provided. The Nye Committee managed to secure the attention not only of the American electorate but also of the British Empire by producing a witness to declare that the King of England had interested himself in acting as salesman for British-made munitions. Instances of absurdities could be multiplied many-fold. It suffices here to note that the atmosphere created is not one calculated to bring to light a factual background for serious legislation.

Once this powerful machine is put in motion, the object of the investigation is helpless. The theory of legislative inquiry seems to permit but two limitations upon the scope of the questions a witness may be required to answer — that is, that the inquiry be one which the legislature has the right to make, and that the question be pertinent to the inquiry. The first limitation is, as indicated above, nearly meaningless; few fields seem to be closed to legislative inquiry. The second limitation is nearly as illusory. The pertinency of a particular question is a question of law. The witness must not only keep his head while he is the centre of so much legislative, journalistic, and photographic interest, but he must at the same time be his own lawyer. If he has the perspicacity to doubt whether a

question is pertinent, he has an interesting possibility. He may decline to answer. The committee then solemnly sits in judgment on the propriety of its own question. If it decides in its own favor, it summons the witness before the bar of the House. The House then passes upon the propriety of the action of its own committee. If it sustains its committee's action, no appeal lies to any independent tribunal at this stage. To bring the question before a court it is necessary that the Sergeant-at-Arms take the witness into custody and that the witness then apply by writ of habeas corpus for his freedom in order to test the matter of whether the question asked him was pertinent. Most decided cases have arisen, therefore, under the interesting circumstances of a witness in jail trying to get out.

V

The Supreme Court has drawn aside and left the legislative bodies practically supreme within their field. Particularly in its most recent pronouncement, the Court seems to have gone at least as far as it need have in respecting the legislature's prerogatives. While the power to punish a witness for contempt for failure to answer a question has been sustained under both the English law and ours for many years, the reason for the decision has been that the legislative body must have the power necessary to make effective its right of inquiry. In simpler terms, the legislature could punish in order to make a man talk. In the *MacCracken* case, however, growing out of the air-mail investigations, the Supreme Court permitted Congress to send *MacCracken* to jail, not because he would n't talk, but by way of punishment for having permitted the destruction of certain papers which could no longer be produced. Congress may therefore use its writ not only to get at the facts now,

but also to give a significant hint to the next witness.

Not only, then, may Congress determine at its fancy what fields it will explore, and sit in judgment on its own thinly disguised prosecution, but it may also write the rules of the game as it goes along. It would be unfair, however, to imply that the investigative machinery is wholly evil. On the contrary, when not abused it is an admirable device. On balance it probably has worked beneficially. As the problems to be met by legislation have increased in complexity, no better instrumentality has been devised for the intelligent thrashing out of difficult issues. The mere existence of such machinery of inquisition also undoubtedly has a wholesome effect on administrative personnel. Indeed, often it seems to work too well; the constant threat of what a Senator may say in a hearing appears at times to have a paralyzing effect on officials. But that on the whole is a minor consideration compared to the general benefit of having a lantern that can be turned into the dark corners of government. More important still, perhaps, is the fact that it gives the minority party a chance. Minority members may be ridden down in voting and subdued by rules of closure, but in open investigations they can make themselves heard. Senator Walsh let in the light of day upon the oil scandals of the post-war period very successfully, though he was a Democrat digging up matter most unpleasant to the dominant Republican administration.

The vice is not in the institution itself, but in its abuse. If Congress had responded to Mr. Lewis's demand by inquiring into the matters he proposed, the issues would presumably have been tried by a committee willing to lend itself to the embarrassment of General Motors and its officers. Only so much of the company's affairs as the in-

quisitors elected to bring out would have made headlines. Explanation of apparently embarrassing facts could have been denied. And though Mr. Sloan might have been sure that the size of his salary had no bearing on the issue of collective bargaining, he could have tested his opinion only from the county jail.

No ready remedy or alleviation is apparent. Legislatures must supply their own restraint. The prospect of that is not bright, but neither is it hopeless. Despite the possibilities of abuse, of the many inquiries that have been started few have been really exploited. It is hard to imagine the formal adoption of any self-denying ordinances by a legislature, but protective precedents may well grow up unawares. For example, though the witness may not demand as of right that he have counsel, yet the right is often granted him and each such concession makes the request harder to refuse the next time. Few men are for very long impervious to demands for fair play. They are even less so

when public opinion is aroused in behalf of the victims of unfair tactics. After the World War no less than fifty-one committees were appointed by a Republican Congress to expose the blunders of the Democratic administration; but General Dawes, with his 'Hell 'n' Maria' and his underslung pipe, in a single day's testimony suffocated the enterprise. He pointed out, with a vigor that made good press copy, that we had been in a war, that horses for artillery were more important than the price paid for them or the requisition blank filled out, and so on; and the so-called 'smelling' committees rather shamefacedly petered out.

In all the discussion of checks and balances of late this unchecked instrument of government seems to have been overlooked. Yet it is obviously being utilized freely as one weapon in the arsenal of government. It is a powerful weapon, capable of good use, capable equally of abuse. The abuse can be controlled only by a constantly asserted public opinion.

AMBROSE, SON OF MARCUS AURELIUS

BY WILSON FOLLETT

An Author saw a Laborer hammering stones into the pavement of a street, and approaching him said: 'My friend, you seem weary. Ambition is a hard taskmaster.'

'I'm working for Mr. Jones, sir,' the Laborer replied.

'Well, cheer up,' the Author resumed; 'fame comes at the most unexpected times. To-day you are poor, obscure, and disheartened, but to-morrow the world may be ringing with your name.'

'What are you telling me?' the Laborer said. 'Can not an honest pavior perform his work in peace, and get his money for it, and his living by it, without others talking rot about ambition and hopes of fame?'

'Can not an honest writer?' said the Author. — *Fantastic Fables*

I

AMBITION he defined as 'an overmastering desire to be vilified by enemies while living and made ridiculous by friends when dead.' Disclaiming it as he might and did for himself, he was not to escape plucking either of the sour fruits specified in his definition. They were, in fact, but half of his harvest, for his friends did what they could to make him ridiculous while he was living, and he has been plentifully vilified by enemies since his mysterious death.

The vilification, whether contemporary or posthumous, is certainly not hard to account for. He was, from first to last, a difficult and thorny being, and his lifelong trade was the making, chiefly gratuitous, of enemies. When a woman feature writer, hounding him for an interview on the rearing of the young, asked him if any of the ancients had bequeathed us profitable counsel on the subject, he replied: 'Study Herod, madam — study Herod.' Publicly placed 'among our three greatest writers' by that kindest of mortals, William Dean Howells, he commented only: 'I am sure Mr. Howells is the

other two.' The pieces of a cane which he had broken over the head of a former associate he saved to remind himself, as he said, of the nature of friendship. He recorded in cold print his sorrow because cremation had robbed him of the pleasure of spitting on a dead enemy's grave. When Theodore Roosevelt, always eclectic in his hospitality, invited him to the White House he replied that he had a previous engagement with an old friend who was visiting Washington, and that he never neglected old friends to make new. Roosevelt neatly parried with a second note ending 'Come to-night, and let us be old friends.' When, toward the close of the evening, the President showed the spirited painting of the Rough Riders at San Juan Hill, with himself leading the charge, his implacable guest stated that the picture was historically false, inasmuch as Roosevelt had not been among those present.

An imp of the perverse drove this strange man all his days, and the more inexorably as his days became many. His stories, of which by his own ac-

count he had never shown a line to any publisher east of the Rockies, he issued in San Francisco with a prefatory statement that they had been 'denied existence by the chief publishing houses of the country.' He quarreled violently with all that he hated, and twice as violently with much that he loved. From the mother of his children, the one woman whom, by his own solemn avowal late in life, he had ever loved, he parted for a no-reason which was reason enough to him, and for her remaining years he communicated with her only through an intermediary. Through an intermediary went likewise the sums he sent at intervals to the widow of his son; for he had declined to see her as either bride or widow. On the threshold of old age he could still refer to his parents, estimable Mid-West farming folk, as 'unwashed savages.' As surely as he was Ambrose Gwinett, youngest son and ninth child of Marcus Aurelius Bierce, as surely as he was born on June 24, 1842, in the hamlet of Meigs County, Ohio, then known as Horse Cave, just so surely he was writing about himself and still loathing his origins when he set down the words: —

Ah, woe is his, with length of living cursed,
Who, nearing second childhood, had no first.
Behind, no glimmer, and before no ray —
A night at either end of his dark day.

II

Ambrose Bierce the man, while he was alive, both gained and lost by his brilliant perversity, the glamour of his personal legend; but Ambrose Bierce the writer has only lost by it. It is, to this day, chief among the factors which keep his genius from being seen in rational perspective.

For the forty years past, and especially during the twenty-odd since his romantic, much-publicized disappearance, he has been treated as an irre-

sistibly fascinating character who happened to do a good deal of miscellaneous writing in his day. Insatiate curiosity about the man prompts students of the bizarre to look up the writings and glance through them; and what they see is, naturally, whatever happens to reinforce the legend of the man. This approach happens to be the one utterly futile method of prospecting for what is of ultimate importance in Bierce. Obsession with such a personality is like fixing one's eyes on a glare — it being the property of a glare to blind one to all but itself. Bierce's epigram on the sea gull which dashes itself to destruction against the lighthouse is a perfect statement of what has happened to virtually all contemplation of himself.

The ministry of light is guide, not goal.

To survey the works in the light of the man's vagaries is to be dazzled by irrelevancies and incidentals, and so to miss the steady luminosity which the works have always had in themselves and perhaps always will have.

The tide of interest in Bierce and of print about him rose steadily after his disappearance in 1914. It reached full flood in the year 1929, which brought forth no fewer than five books about Bierce. With the exception of one, Mr. Vincent Starrett's bibliography, they were preoccupied with a commanding personality to the neglect of a commanding pen. The general impression which one gets from them is that Bierce was a rocket and that his work is the charred stick which came down to prove the fact and the line of his flight.

Even the quasi-official life by Mr. Carey McWilliams, the one rich, authoritative, permanently valuable source of information about Bierce in spite of some faults of presentation, ends on this discouraging surmise: 'Perhaps the ultimate judgment will be that he was more interesting as a

man than important as a writer.' Mr. McWilliams, quite properly for his purpose, did not even attempt a rounded critical evaluation. He comments *in extenso* only on Bierce's stories. Now, the stories do indeed provide a handle to some aspects of Bierce which a biographer can hardly ignore; but to create, for however logical a reason, the net impression that his literary importance springs chiefly from his stories is a capital distortion of the very subject one is trying to bring to focus. It is as if one should portray Thackeray in terms of his minor miscellanies in *Punch* with only a slighting incidental mention of *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis*.

Of Bierce's eventual 'dramatic exit' into Mexico Mr. McWilliams remarks: 'Nothing he ever did was more fortunate so far as his fame is concerned.' True enough, from the point of view which tacitly belittles the writings while magnifying the writer. But what if one happen to be concerned with another kind of fame? The question then becomes: What did the dramatic exit accomplish toward making Bierce known in the sense of being pondered, inwardly digested, or simply read?

The answer thus far is, Next to nothing.

III

Bierce himself played into the hands of his detractors conscious and unconscious, hostile and friendly. At the low practical plane on which men achieve careers in letters and make themselves felt in their own day, he was one of the poorest managers who ever lived. In the period 1870-1900 there was but one possible way for such a writer to make his works count for a fraction of their worth. That way was by an unbroken association of decades with an established publishing house which could understand him, have faith in his long-range importance, and work and plan

with him year in and year out for an indefinitely delayed reward. So far from benefiting by any such steadying continuity, Bierce published his little volumes of journalistic scraps here and there from London to San Francisco, at capricious intervals and in small editions which soon became minor collectors' items. His books were given to the world with the testy absent-mindedness of a bored child throwing handfuls of pebbles into a pond, and with about as much effect. Some of them he owed to the quixotic caprices of friends and idolaters. In the end he gave himself up as hopeless in the rôle of a man of letters. He half reconciled himself to the thought that he had been, after all, nothing but a redoubtable journalist whose trade was, as he said, abuse.

Then, a tired, discouraged, half-forgotten old man, he was made the beneficiary (or the victim) of still another ill-conceived enterprise — this time a pretentious, ornate, forbiddingly monumental *Collected Works* into which his output of a lifetime was crammed with no selection and little arrangement, like remnants into a rag bag. This uncalled-for twelve-volume monstrosity reminds one of Bierce's comment on the absurdity of monuments to the unknown dead — 'that is to say, monuments to perpetuate the memory of those who have left no memory.' He disappeared into Mexico. There or somewhere, in 1914 or another year, he died. The man and the works were at that time alike dead. By a romantic afterthought it was shortly (and dubiously) discovered that the man might be, after all, of the immortals. The works, which have an intrinsic quality suggesting indestructibility, still await their resurrection to immortality.

By posthumous criticism, and also by the form of criticism known as publication, Bierce has been made a victim

of the overspecialized professionalism which conditions most of the activities and institutions of our time. Everyone who has ever had a finger in publishing knows that it is always a burning question what a given author shall be published *as*. Did Bierce write some war stories? Very well, we will reprint them and capitalize on the renewed interest in the psychologic and other phenomena of war. Did he have a flair for the ghostly and the ghastly, was he at home among spinal chills and in the charnel house? Excellent: let us parade him as a neglected master of horror. So, very naturally, the baffled publisher reasons; and the no less baffled critic has always rather abetted than enlightened him. Bierce did work in these two veins, to be sure. He also did work in half a dozen other conventionally established categories. But no one of them is central to Bierce. Not all of them together contain him. To define him as a virtuoso of the short story or the sketch, an essayist, a satirist, a literary critic, a writer of reminiscences, or a practitioner of any other of the literary forms which we are accustomed to find sorted and packed in volumes for our convenience, is completely to miss his distinguishing quality and the source of his transcendence. Yet it is in these ways that he has always been defined.

Hardly a grain of intuition or of basic horse sense has been applied from beginning to end, by either Bierce himself or any other, to the problem of getting his manifest destiny realized and establishing him in his place among viable American authors. There is, to this day, but one method of finding out what Bierce is really worth and what his prolonged inaccessibility costs the national letters. It is a fearfully circuitous method — one physically denied to most and intellectually impossible to some hundreds of thousands who might, if they were permitted, dis-

cover Bierce with the thrill of stout Cortez. The first necessity is to be among the lucky few who possess Bierce in that formidable mausoleum, the *Collected Works*; or, failing this, one must be in a position to haunt an exceptionally well-stocked library. Then one must assimilate some 5000 pages of mingled prose and verse, genius and bathos, wheat and chaff, stuff certainly ephemeral and stuff possibly undying, not only tumbled together in confusion, but actually interpenetrating and almost inextricable. Finally one must, by an act of almost creative criticism which few can perform at all and none without a vast appropriation of time and tissue, winnow the whole immense bulk for oneself — in short, review Bierce in one's mind, not as he was published, but as he might be.

What Ambrose Bierce has always needed, then, what he needs to this hour and minute, is first to be seen, and then to be competently published, and then to be read. The third desideratum is automatic, granted the second. The capital difficulty is the first.

IV

Bierce would have hooted at the prospect of anyone's taking thought in the interest of his posthumous renown and laboring to ensure his eventually coming into, as the saying is, his own. He would have protested instantly that the dead have no 'own.' When he says: 'Respect for the wishes of the dead is a tender and beautiful sentiment, certainly,' he is careful to add: 'Unfortunately, it cannot be ascertained that they have any wishes.' In another context he observes: —

Posthumous fame being what it is — if nothing can be said to be something — the desire to attain it is comic. It seems the invention of a humorist, this ambition to attach to your name . . . something that you will not know you have attached to it.

You labor for a result which you know that you are to be forever unaware that you have brought about — for a personal gratification which you know that you are eternally forbidden to enjoy: if the gods ever laugh, do they not laugh at that?

Let the gods laugh, and Bierce with them; but we have ourselves to think of. As inheritors and beneficiaries of whatever in the past is valuable, durable, we cannot leave him to his beloved oblivion, however disposed we might otherwise be to take him at his reiterated word. A nation which does not eventually salvage the treasures which a Bierce leaves accessibly buried would not deserve to breed men of genius. For a man of genius — pure literary genius — is exactly what Ambrose Bierce was. It is only a question of time, and perhaps of not much time, when we shall see him emerge from the mists of his legend and appear not only as an American writer of the very first stature, but also as a world figure.

What words hitherto written on this continent are likeliest to withstand the abrasions of time we need not pretend to know. Of things which we can set beside the breath-taking thought of immortality without *ipso facto* rendering them (or ourselves) ridiculous, I can think offhand of a few: sixteen lines of Longfellow, bits of Poe; at least two pages of Holmes, more of Thoreau, more still of Melville, conceivably two or three tales of Hawthorne; some letters and various other passages of Abraham Lincoln; the best aphorisms of Emerson and of Poor Richard. To these, after twenty years of constant familiarity which began in skepticism and ended in awe, I am obliged mentally to add a substantial amount of Ambrose Bierce — how much, it is impossible to determine without actually isolating it, but probably more than the English-speaking part of the New World has yet had from any other one pen.

Contemplate any fragment from the best of Bierce: for instance, his definition of applause as 'the echo of a platitude,' or of the forefinger as 'the finger commonly used in pointing out two malefactors,' or of an acquaintance as 'a person whom we know well enough to borrow from, but not well enough to lend to,' or of achievement as 'the death of endeavor and the birth of disgust.' Or take a pair of the prose epigrams: 'At sunset our shadows reach the stars, yet we are no greater at death than at the noon of life'; and this fine one: 'Every heart is the lair of a ferocious animal. The greatest wrong that you can put upon a man is to provoke him to let out his beast.' Or let it be one of the epigrams in verse: —

Think not, O man, the world has any need
That thou canst truly serve by word or deed.
Serve thou thy better self, nor care to know
How God makes righteousness and roses grow.

Or one of the several hundreds of fables, some in prose, some in rhyme: —

A Philosopher seeing a Fool beating his Donkey said: 'Abstain, my son, abstain, I implore. Those who resort to violence shall suffer from violence.'

'That,' said the Fool, diligently belaboring the animal, 'is what I am trying to teach this beast — which has kicked me.'

'Doubtless,' said the Philosopher to himself, as he walked away, 'the wisdom of fools is no deeper nor truer than ours, but they really do seem to have a more impressive way of imparting it.'

Because it is nearly impossible to imagine such *aperçus* as having had a personal author or a beginning, it is likewise hard to think of them as ceasing to be. They have a quality of intrinsic inevitableness — the quality of La Rochefoucauld's undying maxim that 'Hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue,' or of Joubert's that 'The man of imagination without learning has wings and no feet.' It is as if they had always been. Reading them, we say: These things were not written,

they were discovered. Devoid of all betrayal of effort, all eccentricity either temporal or personal, they possess the limpidity of perfect style. They are quite as good in one language as in another, and in any language they seem to have written themselves. It is not even possible to detect that the ones written sixty years ago have either more or less of perennial timeliness than those written but thirty years ago. Look at them from what side you will, they present no facet to attrition; for their hardness is that of the black diamond.

V

It is a matter for some astonishment that no one has seized on the quasi-symbolical hint contained in the biographic accident of Bierce's sonship to a man named Marcus Aurelius. This name, in the illumination of subsequent events and the peculiar nature of Ambrose Bierce's distinction, seems like a prophecy uttered in the year 1799. The son, together with what he inherited from the Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut Bierces, got from somewhere a quality and a stature of mind such as put him actually in the lineage of the timeless classical moralists, aphorists, epigrammatists, and fabulists. Like them he repeatedly packed the whole force of his wit, the entire scope of his imagination, into a page, a *pensée*, a quatrain, an epithet.

It is a remarkable testimony to the ascendancy of a momentary fashion, a socio-literary habit, and the dictates laid down by the publishing trade for its own convenience, that critics will still seek in vain to localize Bierce's magnificence where it was always the most clouded — that is, in his longer works, and more especially his tales of soldiers, civilians, and ghosts. The age, it appears, wants its writers to be great by the ream, the romance, the tome, the shelfful. It can hardly be prevailed

upon to look elsewhere for greatness. But we have to seek Bierce's by the anecdote, the paragraph, the retort courteous or discourteous, the single line, on pain of not finding it at all. The last thought to occur to us is that (as Joubert also said) what is exquisite is better than what is ample — and this in spite of the swarming reminders that, of all that has long survived, little is to be found in fiction and little of that little in the realistic novel. We are disconcerted and baffled by a writer whose longevity is his wit — 'the salt with which,' Bierce said, 'the American humorist spoils his intellectual cookery by leaving it out.'

Bierce himself had the firmest possible grasp of these truisms, and all his thinking as a critic was done beyond the range of our modern illusion about the surpassing importance of novels. St. Peter's, he said, is a work of high art; then he asked, 'But is Rome a work of high art?' 'The only way to get unity of impression from a novel is to shut it up and look at the covers.' 'Novels are still produced in suspicious abundance and read with fatal acclaim, but the novel of to-day has no art broader and better than that of its individual sentences — the art of style. That would serve if it had style.' 'To their gift of genius the gods add no security against its misdirection. I wish they did. I wish they would enjoin its diffusion in the novel, as for so many centuries they did by forbidding the novel to be. And what more than they gave might we not have had from Virgil, Dante, Tasso, Camoëns, and Milton if they had not found the epic poem ready to their misguided hands?' 'The art of writing novels, such as it was, is long dead everywhere except in Russia, where it is new. Peace to its ashes — some of which have a large sale.' Bierce also expressed his literary philosophy in that most famous of all brief reviews (of course, of a realistic novel): 'The covers

of this book are too far apart.' And he seldom missed an occasion to point out that current novels, though read and written about, go unjudged. 'Of the incalculable multitude written only a few have been read by competent judges, and of those judges few indeed have uttered judgment that is of record.'

The late Mrs. Mary Austin — a novelist — is reported by Mr. McWilliams as having found Bierce 'conscious of lack and failure in his own life. . . . What he really wanted would not come.' And she speaks of his 'alternate high confidence in himself and puzzled bewilderment over the failure of his genius.' Mrs. Austin, who was brilliantly wrong about many things, seems to have been dully right about Bierce's attitude toward himself. At least half the time he believed that he had wasted eminent gifts and made a blank failure of a life which might have counted if he had not frittered it away. But a man's notion of what he has accomplished may be one thing, his actual accomplishment another; and in the strange, perverse economy of genius the longest way round may be the shortest way home.

Bierce squandered himself, as it seemed, for year after year in the production of columns of witty trifles for the Hearst papers (which, by the way, he used chiefly for the expression of views diametrically opposed to everything young Mr. Hearst thought and was); and when it was all done and the sands run out it was to be perceived, by those having eyes to see, that he had submitted himself to the one form of compulsion most perfectly designed for his self-fulfillment. He had kept his independence of mind. He had been saved in spite of himself from all manner of diffuseness and from the consequences of the facility which was his without the structural sense to make a salutary use of it. And he had wrought, as it were in a trance, a greater

body of consummate, hard-hammered, supremely original opuscles than we owe to any other American and perhaps to any other modern. It is idle, it is fantastic, to argue that such a man did not, up to the measure of reasonable human possibility, get himself expressed. Whatever he thought himself, whatever he may have died thinking, he had not failed.

There were, indeed, times when he himself had more than an inkling of the sense in which his ostensible waste was the only conservation, his temporary failure the eventual success in which he instinctively believed. Surely his own story, with that of the critics who would reduce him to their standardized preconceptions and make him out anything on earth but what he was, is told clear-sightedly enough in these lines 'For a Certain Critic': —

The lark, ascending heavenward, loud and long
Sings to the dawning day his wanton song.
The moaning dove, attentive to the sound,
Its hidden meaning hastens to expound:
Explains its principles, design — in brief,
Pronounces it a parable of grief!
The bee, just pausing ere he daubs his thigh
With pollen from a hollyhock near by,
Declares he never heard in terms so just
The labor problem thoughtfully discussed.
The browsing ass looks up and clears his whistle
To say: 'A monologue upon the thistle!'
Meanwhile the lark, descending, folds his wing
And innocently asks: 'What! — did I sing?'

VI

Time and the recurrences of history have strangely renewed the pertinence of a great deal that Bierce wrote in his lightest topical vein and must have regarded at the time as ephemeral journalism needlessly well written for its use. He had a mysterious knack of seizing on the eternally recurrent aspects of things; and I do not see why we may not, with aptness and in all sobriety, call that knack genius. ('These are the prerogatives of genius: To know without having learned; to draw

just conclusions from unknown premises; to discern the soul of things.') A mind which has once been even slightly steeped in Bierce is thereafter constantly visited by a curious sense of plagiarism in the events which make up any day's news, and remembered words of his may unexpectedly mildew the freshest thoughts of our day almost before they can be uttered.

On the morning when I sat down to begin these paragraphs a trivial item in the early news broadcast reported an impending strike by 1700 unionized drivers of funeral cars and hearses in Manhattan. ('Hearse, *n.* Death's baby-carriage.') The advertised return of good times had emboldened the members of this worthy sodality to claim five dollars more a week for their services to society. I found myself suddenly challenged by that feeling of significant familiarity which we have — illusively — in dreams. It took only a second to identify its source across a gap of some years, and only a minute more to find it. It was Bierce's fable called 'A Prophet of Evil': —

An Undertaker Who Was a Member of a Trust saw a Man Leaning on a Spade and asked him why he was not at work.

'Because,' said the Man Leaning on a Spade, 'I belong to the Gravediggers' National Extortion Society, and we have decided to limit the production of graves and get more money for the reduced output. We have a corner in graves and purpose working it to the best advantage.'

'My friend,' said the Undertaker Who Was a Member of the Trust, 'this is a most hateful and injurious scheme. If people can not be assured of graves I fear they will no longer die, and the best interests of civilization will wither like a frosted leaf.'

And blowing his eyes upon his handkerchief, he walked away lamenting.

The last Presidential campaign reverberated with just such echoes. Here are two that have stuck in my memory: —

(1) One of the candidates announced a sudden decision to stump several thousand miles of itinerary that he had earlier conceded to his opponent. To the reader of Bierce this occurrence could not fail to bring back the fable of the Man Running for Office and overtaken by Lightning, which, as it 'crept past him inch by inch,' boasted: 'I can travel considerably faster than you.' 'Yes,' the Man Running for Office replied, 'but think how much longer I keep going.' (2) On the morning of November 4, a news broadcast reported that quaint quadrennial phenomenon of American politics, the defeated candidate's message of congratulation to the opponent whom, up to twenty-four hours earlier, he had been denouncing as a menace to our institutions — a message to the usual effect that, the voice of the people having been heard, it was the part of every good American to acquiesce faithfully in their decision. The words that inevitably flashed into my mind were, as usual, Bierce's: —

'To the will of the people we loyally bow!'
That's the minority shibboleth now.
O noble antagonists, answer me flat —
What would you do if you did n't do that?

Bierce's touch was just as unerring in comment on the ironies implicit in international affairs and racial relations. On the very morning when Mr. Landon announced his electioneering excursion to the West Coast, London was being agitated by the news of bloody Moslem-Hindu street riots in Bombay. Bierce's little editorial comment reaches us across half a century: —

Hearing a sound of strife, a Christian in the Orient asked his Dragoman the cause of it.

'The Buddhists are cutting Mohammed-an throats,' the Dragoman replied with Oriental composure.

'I did not know,' remarked the Christian with scientific interest, 'that that would make so much noise.'

'The Mohammedans are cutting Buddhist throats,' added the Dragoman.

'It is astonishing,' mused the Christian, 'how violent and how general are religious animosities.'

So saying, he visibly smugged and went off to telegraph for a brigade of cutthroats to protect Christian interests.

Thus, by a curious fatality, the world keeps putting its toes into bear traps which Bierce set decades ago. There is hardly an aspect of current domestic or international politics, æsthetics, industry, or science upon which he did not utter some word of a more telling finality than the new words which each occasion brings forth in floods. The whole moral history of Geneva and of Europe in the sinister years 1935-1936 is packed into the dialogue of his one terrible page called 'Moral Principle and Material Interest.' On the various economic quackeries of depression the last, most crushing word is still his: —

Philosopher. — I have been thinking of the pocopo.

Fool. — So have I; what is it?

Philosopher. — The pocopo is a small Brazilian animal, chiefly remarkable for singularity of diet. A pocopo eats nothing but other pocopos. As these are not easily obtained, the annual mortality from starvation is very great. As a result, there are fewer mouths to feed, and by consequence the race is rapidly multiplying.

Fool. — From whom had you this?

Philosopher. — A professor of political economy.

Fool. — Let us rise and uncover.

And the pious and fervid nationalists who insist to-day that God is on the side of their revived militarism, and that their aims are really dictated by the principles of Christian ethics, put themselves squarely in the trajectory of the epigram — a rabid pacifist-hater's utterance, by the way — which ends: —

... Somewhat lamely the conception runs
Of a brass-buttoned Jesus firing guns.

The same uncanny pertinence runs through a good half of Bierce's work, including much of it which, being specifically topical, can hardly have been expected to reach beyond its passing hour. There is, for example, a casual jingle called 'The Statesmen,' one of many written of another depression campaign in another century. It reads like a trenchant and accurate lampoon of the seven 1936 contenders for the Presidency and their haranguing partisans (harangue-outangs, Bierce once named their kind). It begins: —

How blest the land that counts among
Her sons so many good and wise,
To execute great feats of tongue
When troubles rise.

Then he sets the speakers one after another on their stumps — the men who shout with one voice: 'I — I alone — can show that black is white as grass.' Free silver is the panacea of one, free trade of another, freer banking laws of a third. ('Free board, clothes, lodging would from me win warm applause.') The single-taxer lifts up his voice, and after him the inflationist — 'as many cures as addle-wits who know not what the ailment is.' From contemplation of the orators he falls to diagnosing the ills of the suffering Body Politic, whose wretched fate it is 'to be not altogether quick, nor very dead. You take your exercise in squirms, your rest in fainting fits between.' The complaint, he decides, is nothing but worms:

Worm Capital, Worm Labor dwell
Within your maw and muscle's scope.
Their quarrels make your life a hell,
Your death a hope.

And he ends this occasional trifle on a Butlerian touch well calculated to provoke rapacious envy in the best of our contemporary wits of the daily column and make their everlasting fortunes if they could contrive to duplicate it: —

God send you convalesce! God send
You vermifuge.

It would, however, be a pity to leave the impression that Bierce's province was primarily political satire. I can think of scarce a phase of morals, religion, invention, or human relations which the reader of Bierce does not sooner or later see with a new starkness in the glare of his lightning flash. He even has, I discover, some petards to set under the grand shaman of psychoanalysis whose 250,000-word treatise I have miled my way through in the interest of a publisher who needs one ounce of sense which he can understand on several pounds of ingenious hocus-pocus which he cannot. One of the most concentrated and high-powered of the petards is this: 'Thought and emotion dwell apart. When the heart goes into the head there is no dissension: only an eviction.'

And here is a last general word on the subject — a word which fits our day almost infinitely better than that for which it was written and will fit tomorrow better yet: —

'Whose dead body is that?'

'Credulity's.'

'By whom was he slain?'

'Credulity.'

'Ah, suicide.'

'No, surfeit. He dined at the table of Science, and swallowed all that was set before him.'

VII

Bierce hated, in his time, some things which no longer seem so very hateful. He fought against ideas which now look impregnable and for ideas which the world has thrown on its scrap heap. Against labor and capital, democracy and monarchism, imperialistic war and pacifistic sentimentalism, he was equally implacable. Politically he was nearer to the complete Fascist, the out-and-out Hitlerian, than to anything else now extant; and yet he abominated tyranny. Sometimes, no doubt in weariness of spirit, he perpetrated humor

which was jangling, in bad taste, and, worst of all, not very funny. His character contained indefensible (though not inexplicable) elements of arrogance, obstinacy, and the snob-baiter's snob-bishness. Mr. H. L. Mencken, himself not exactly an apostle of optimistic sweetness and light, recoils from Bierce's 'appalling cynicism.' Perhaps the man's only quality which never knew a flaw was his courage.

This imbalance of attributes is inevitable material for the biographer. It is perhaps important to the critic, too, while an author is alive and his claim to attention an issue still being fought out. It may even be relevant to posthumous criticism of works composed on a scale great enough to contain the author whole, as novels and histories may. It has always been customary to discuss the work of Bierce in conjunction with his brilliant defects, and to find the defects in the writings by the simple process of ignoring those which do not contain them. But to-day, twenty-odd years after the probable time of his death, what do such excrescences matter to us as readers of that which we find intrinsically worth our time?

Bierce was always passionate in defense of two ideas: first, that a work of the imagination must be judged entirely apart from the personality which produced it; secondly, that an author, like a race horse or a discus thrower, has a reasonable claim to be rated by his best performances, not his worst or his average. These stipulations apply with unique force to his own characteristic works, precisely because they are so concentrated as to be nullified by the smallest flaw. If there is perfection in them, you may be sure that there is nothing else, for there is room for nothing else.

'The philosopher's profoundest conviction is that which he is most reluctant to express, lest he mislead.' 'Noth-

ing is more logical than persecution. Religious tolerance is a kind of infidelity.' 'Experience is a revelation in the light of which we renounce the errors of youth for those of age.' 'In childhood we expect, in youth demand, in manhood hope, and in age beseech.' 'Adam probably regarded Eve as the woman of his choice, and exacted a certain gratitude for the distinction of his preference.' 'We are what we laugh at. The stupid person is a poor joke; the clever, a good one.'

'God keep thee, stranger; what is thy name?'

'Wisdom. And thine?'

'Knowledge. How does it happen that we meet?'

'This is an intersection of our paths.'

'Will it ever be decreed that we travel always the same road?'

'We were well named if we knew.'

Cried Age to Youth: 'Abate your speed!

The distance hither's brief indeed.'

But Youth pressed on without delay —

The shout had reached but half the way.

In such things — and Bierce turned them out by hundreds — what matters or can ever matter but the justice of the perceptions, the impact of the truth or half-truth, the swift outflowing of suggestion, the sovereign way he had with words? What difference can it make whether the man behind the words was once, in his mortal clay, proud or humble, consistent or erratic, philanthropist or misanthrope, materialist or mystic, Catholic, Protestant, or pagan? Is there anything in the words themselves to disclose to you that he was a hedonist, a journalist, an adoptive Californian, a father, an ex-soldier who had been wounded and decorated for valor? Would they be any less incredible from an ascetic, a

scholar, a Vermonter, a bachelor, a hunchback? Could you even tell by internal evidence within a century of when they were written? And if their author wrote so much as one paragraph which lives, how is it made in any single particular more or less living by the order or confusion of his life, or by the number of other paragraphs he may also have written which are now as dead as he?

In the worked-over river beds of his California in recent summers twenty-odd thousands of unprosperous hardy folk have camped and lived by the panning of gold. It does not occur to them to complain much about the quantity of sand and gravel that washes away as they rock their pans or sluice boxes. The issue to them is how many grains of gold remain when the last handful of waste has disappeared.

Ambrose Bierce's dross might have been, but was not, washed away in the critical process of editing his work for publication — a process unhappily never half performed. Subsequently his waste might have been sluiced away by public criticism and the composite taste of readers; but no sufficiently alert and disinterested consensus of criticism has yet been brought to bear, and, as I have noted, the work has been physically inaccessible to all but a trifling number.

The gold and the gravel, intermingled, remain *in situ* to this day, waiting for the greater critic called Time to do the work which the others have neglected. That the gold is there, of a purity and weight to stick to the pan, I have tried to indicate by a few random samples. Devoutly I believe that Time is going to prove, as I cannot, that it is not fools' gold.

A KLEPTOMANIAC'S MIND

ANONYMOUS

I

November 1. — Is that psychologist really right who says that theft is a universal instinct, inhibited by training, fear, pride, or will power? My parents were adamant in their views of honesty, and my one whipping came from picking up a show bill from a neighbor's yard. My own social and professional prominence should have brought fear and pride into my life as inhibiting agents. By my will power I have surmounted unusual difficulties in attaining my ambitions. Yet I am a shoplifter; in fact, I might be called 'an old offender.'

To be sure, there have been periods in my life when I did not yield to this urge; when I even looked down on such acts with disgust, coupled with a feeling of my own lasting regeneration. Then suddenly would recur the inability to resist the lure of possession without payment. There may be a connection between these criminal lapses and the crises of a nervous trouble that is part of my physical life, for these kleptomaniac impulses seem to check up with my periods of physical instability. Lately the habit has clutched me terrifically, so that there seems to be no escape from its power. I pray for protection, for I know that I am helpless against it.

I pray on my knees at night, and the next day may see me at a counter waiting a chance. I have made an agreement with myself that I will stop

when I reach twenty-five dollars. Yesterday when I passed the police station I had a convincing feeling that I should sometime see the inside of the room labeled 'Desk Sergeant.' Yet, while I see the result clearly, I have no power of lasting resistance to save myself. I did not go downtown to-day, for it was one of my hard days; but to-morrow I teach little and I know that I shall go.

November 2. — I came home to-day in high glee and satisfaction because I had taken articles worth ten dollars. This is my biggest day's work. Some of these things I really wanted; others were simply easy to take. What shall I do with this marcel net? I do not wear my hair marcelled. I do not want this ring with the cheap imitation stone from the ten-cent store, for I have many valuable rings.

As I entered my room I said to myself, as to a second, a stay-at-home personality, 'See what pretty things I have brought you.' Then I took out the articles to gloat over their safe possession. I recall the cunning with which I covered up that set of Madeira napkins with a larger bundle as I lifted it. That store seems particularly easy for shoplifters, for the clerks are inattentive.

For several weeks now I have been doing this, yet have never had a glance of suspicion directed toward me in any store where I have operated. This may

be due to the fact that I dress well and have a certain air of aristocracy which would mislead even an alert clerk. I am careful not to frequent any store too much, lest my face and clothes become familiar. This double life, however, is making me have a double face. My students have often told me that I have the look of a Madonna. To-day as I passed a store mirror I was shocked at the countenance under my hat. I admitted to myself, 'You are a thief.' This self-revelation, however, did not stop me.

I went over to the Big Store to a sale of stamped goods. I find safe pickings in advertised sales, where the clerks are often unable to cope with the crowds, and goods lie in tumbled disarray on the counters. To-day I facetiously called it a grab bag, as I saw the frantic efforts of the shoppers. I thrust my hand in under a pile as the crowd of women pushed me about. I made up my mind to keep whatever I grasped. When I pulled it out it was a fancy apron which, with its ribbons, was a bit hard to hide, but I escaped notice in the hurry.

I ordinarily have taken small things which could be covered with my palm or handkerchief or pouch bag. To-day I dared to take a package nightgown. I find that I take larger as well as more valuable articles. I wonder why I was afraid two months ago to take a paper of needles. It is so easy.

There is the bell. I must stop to go to my psychology class, where we have the chapter on habit. . . . I have just returned from class and have hidden in shame the things over which I gloated an hour ago. It was a terrible strain to teach that chapter on habit and its effect on character. There I stood as a highly erudite teacher, a model for my pupils. The scholar was in the ascendancy and I shuddered at the knowledge of my double complex. I fear for that higher self of mine.

November 4. — I find that I have gone beyond the twenty-five dollars which I had fixed as my limit. Since I have run so much above it, I think I shall move the goal to fifty. I keep an account of all I take, with the price, and call it my 'uplift list,' with a laugh at the irony. I read somewhere the other day that such computations of illegal gains were characteristic of the thief. I had a curious dream last night. I thought that Dr. Raines, the head of the school, whom I fairly worship, had accused me of stealing the reception-room rugs. (I have often coveted them, thinking how easily the small ones could be taken; in fact, it is becoming a habit with me to visualize the theft of desirable objects.) The dream was so vivid that I could not go back to sleep. Finally I rose and spent the time till dawn going over my uplift list.

The thought occurs to me that the Christmas rush and the inventory sales will help me complete my goal soon.

November 9. — I have not been off the campus for a week. I have been fighting desire, and have hoped to win, but to-day I feel too weak to resist the urge longer. I have no legitimate excuse to go to town, yet I know that I shall go; even though I am heartily sick of the whole business, wasting time at counters, living amid thefts which must be kept secret, piling up things of which I have too many already. I seem to have no self-determination left. Is this that habit of which I prate in psychology, or is it foreordination, dear to my Calvinistic forbears? Did God foreordain me to be damned? The solution of myself as a psychological and religious problem interests me as a psychologist, but it seems to be entirely out of my hands.

November 11. — I found a new article easy to take to-day. (In my

thoughts, I always say 'take,' not 'steal.') After psychology, my great passion is music, and I have a large collection of phonograph records. It was while buying records to-day that it occurred to me to slip one in between the other stacks. To-day's haul put me beyond the fifty mark. That means, of course, that I shall fix a higher goal, for I am beginning to lose faith in my goals as decisive stops; they have simply become incentives to take more things.

Thanksgiving Day. — The stores are closed to-day and I am glad, because I am beginning to dread my easy days. When I am busy, I forget the stores and their call. I have stayed at home almost two weeks because of examinations and the preparation of a paper for a state teachers' meeting. When I gave this paper yesterday, Dr. Raines was quite happy over its reception, and told me how well my work was going. What if he should find out!

November 30. — I went downtown to-day on my usual errand, and to-night I have been ill — ill enough for a doctor. He said that my pulse was over one hundred and twenty and acted quite concerned. He laid it to my heavy school work, but I know better. It is associated with the whirl of excitement that accompanies my trips downtown. The habit is growing on me frightfully. I feel compelled to take something in every store I enter. I am depressed if I am unable to do so. It is just as if I were neglecting my duty. The mania is fairly driving me these days. I have now fixed on one hundred dollars as the ultimate limit beyond which I absolutely will not go. I must stop before something happens.

December 3. — I had to have some paper to-day, but I was afraid to go by myself to get it. So I hunted up Miss Peterson, one of the dorm teachers. I had never taken anything when in company with another person. To-day,

however, when she was looking at powder, I covered a small box of rouge with my glove and picked it up, without detection. That was foolish, for I might have involved her. I wonder why I do this thing that will ruin me. My salary of twenty-five hundred cares amply for my present and future. Detection of my paltry thefts would mean disgrace to the school as well as to me. Yet it is apparent that I am losing fear. I am almost careless in taking risks, as is the way of the successful criminal. I call myself a lone wolf, a super-thief; yet I have the utmost scorn for anyone else who steals. I think I shall call a halt at seventy-five dollars, for I want to be free from this habit that is endangering my life.

December 5. — The thing has happened, at last, but not exactly as I had visualized it. It was much worse. It was quite different from that experience out West years ago, when a clerk asked me if I had not picked up a fifteen-cent handkerchief by mistake, and I put it back on the counter. Eastern stores must have a different way of dealing with such cases. This afternoon I had started to the library to read; but, finding it not yet open, I went to the basement of the Big Store and took five dollars' worth of goods. Then I went back to the library, where I lost myself in a new work on psychoanalysis which had just come in. I knew that I had to quit at five to catch the suburban car. The car was late, they said, and my eye fell on the Big Store on the opposite corner. I became obsessed with the thought of a silk scarf which I had seen, although I already possessed two. I turned toward the store, disregarding an inner warning, for my continuous success conquered precaution.

I went to a counter where the clerks were busy. Another customer seemed

to be examining the tumbled mass with me. At last I found the thing which had lured me back. A short moment of deliberation ended in decision. I laid my manuscript carrier on top of it, picked carelessly at the other articles in the heap, then lifted my stack and went toward the elevator, followed by the other customer. At the ground floor, I saw her glance quickly at my armload of bundles. It did not disturb me. I was just leaving the front door when I felt a hand on my shoulder and heard the words, 'Excuse me, madam, did you not pick up something?' I turned and saw the other customer, who, it appeared, was a professional shopper and store detective. She strong-armed me upstairs at the rear, despite my protestations of innocence and my promise to pay for 'it.' But the detective held me firmly, and we went on. It was all done in a very quiet way, and no one could have guessed that a thief had been caught; for rarely is the store detective known even to the clerks.

At last we reached the office, where an elderly and pompous man was seated. When I began by asserting that I was accused falsely, he interrupted with 'Stop your lies.' The detective searched my pockets, bag, and manuscript case, and of course found all my afternoon's spoils. Why had I not been content with what I had taken three hours ago? I said that I had bought the goods. He sneered, 'Then show your sales checks.' Never before had I realized the value of sales checks.

At first I refused to tell my name and address, on account of the school, but he threatened me with a night in jail and police who would make me tell. That opened my lips. He promised to protect the name of the school. 'An educated woman!' he ejaculated. In my purse they found my deposit slip for my last month's salary, still un-

touched. 'Money in the bank and doing this!' he said. By this time he had taken a printed form, filled it in with my description and answers, and handed it to me. The card says that you voluntarily acknowledge the theft of the articles listed, having received no promise of immunity. (The word 'voluntarily' is misleading, for you really sign it to avoid the threatened police.) It was a terrible moment, but I signed the card. All this time I was in terrified ignorance of what was to be done with me, and I was quite relieved when he said, 'We are going to make you pay for these things.' I gladly did this, although I wanted none of them enough to have bought them.

When I heard, 'You may go, but let this be a guide to the future,' I went out in a daze, looking nowhere lest I should see eyes, eyes. I felt as if I had been lashed. I had left my good name in that room on a card, and for what? For those things which the manager had made me take with me. Perhaps there was a psychological motive in his insistence, for I have thrown them back into a dark corner of my closet and never want to see them again. There is no gloating over them.

I am still weak from excitement. I shall have to take more luminal to make me sleep to-night. My heart is on a big rampage and every nerve is lashing. I have used a lot of luminal lately, much more than the doctor prescribed, for his dose did me no good. It is the only thing which will quiet my excitement, yet it may be weakening my will power.

Just now, it occurs to me that I should like to start out to hunt up another doctor who might give me a statement that luminal in overdose could explain my actions this afternoon. It is not yet nine o'clock and I might find some doctor at home. I think I could sleep better if I had such a statement in sight.

December 6. — I did find a doctor, an oldish man, who wrote out such a statement as I desired — that a dose of luminal in excess could explain my actions of yesterday. He thought it was my first offense, and I did not correct his impression. He had decided views on the dangers of luminal anyway; did not use it in his practice. He agreed that it might influence conduct. He charged me well for his opinion, but his statement is worth it and will surely go far in clearing my name at the Big Store.

I could hardly wait to take it to the manager, who seemed impressed and treated me with more respect than he did yesterday. The old doctor had given me a prescription for my shot nerves; and while it was being filled I picked up a framed motto card and a bottle of perfumery from the counter. My recent experience has affected me little, except to make me more cautious.

December 7. — I must get enough to balance the money I paid out to the old doctor for his statement. To-day I evened up almost a dollar by handkerchiefs which will go as Christmas presents to my laundress (since they are not my style). I can hardly sleep for the thought of that card at the Big Store. No one can ever realize what it means to sign such a card. The horror of it grows on me.

December 15. — I must get that card. I wake up at night repeating, 'I confess that I did deliberately steal.' I can never be happy in a town where I am card-indexed as a thief. I wonder who are my neighbors in that box! I must resign my position, giving health as a cause; but I want to take that card with me. I have not taken anything for a week.

December 17. — I spent last night rehearsing my speech. This morning before class I dressed in my most becoming clothes, made up my face to look

my best, and went down to the Big Store, to ask the man for that card. He was simply wonderful, telling me not to explain, for it was evident that I was ill that day. (Yes, that doctor bill was well spent.) He said not to be foolish and resign, for no one knew of the affair.

Then we went up to that private office, full of shame to me, where he tore the card to pieces before my eyes, telling me to forget it, as he had. I took the pieces and put them in my pocket, for they may counterbalance the lure of the uplift list. Besides, in my possession, they surely can betray no secret. When I rose, he steadied me, for I almost fell from weakness. At the front door, he said, 'Now will you have a Merry Christmas?' I was so happy that I dropped a dollar into the Salvation Army kettle. I felt as if I had had a spiritual bath and could never steal again. When I got home, I fell on my knees and thanked God that He had made a man so good.

December 24. — When did I write last? Oh yes, when I was feeling so happy — so confident that the passion for taking things was cured in me. Victory over my besetting sin seemed so certain. It is no use. I cannot stop. I am still taking things, although I do keep clear of the big department stores, lest I get caught and my name be sent on a black list to the Big Store. I do not want to disappoint my Good Angel there. To-day, when I was buying records as Christmas gifts at a new music store, I passed a table where piles of them were displayed. Following my impulse, I picked up several which I stacked and then put my wrapped records on top. The clerks were busy and I went toward the door. All looked safe.

In the aisle a man, possibly the proprietor, asked me if I 'got all I wanted.' It was a common enough remark, such

as any proprietor or clerk might make to a well-dressed customer; yet it had an ambiguous turn. I smiled assent and walked out as if in no hurry at all. Because of my doubt over the remark, I stopped in front as if to gaze at the window exhibit, but in reality to see if I was being followed. I soon felt safe in the stream of shoppers. I took the precaution of using an elevator in an office building, and after pausing awhile in a waiting room I came down by the stairs. I was suspicious when an alert woman stopped at the same windows as I did, and I was glad when I lost her on the other side of a car. I went over to the library and read psychology for three hours so zealously that I forgot completely about the records till I lifted them to leave. How heavy the bundle was! I wondered how many I had taken. On my way home in the car, by furtive glances, I figured that my haul to-day would surely even up that doctor bill for the statement.

January 4. — I have just returned from my Christmas vacation back home in Iowa. The folks thought I looked thin and harassed. They said that this school-teaching in the East must be nerve-racking, but they did not know that this shoplifting is worse. I am determined to keep out of the stores till I get over the habit.

January 8. — I had another alarming experience to-day. I had intended to stay at home for a month, but Miss Stein, the sick music teacher, wanted me to get some supplies at the music store. The table of records was still there. I bought some, but could not resist the old temptation. Miss Stein's harmony book was big enough to act as a cover and I used the trick which had been so often successful. As I turned away, the clerk said, 'You have too many records there.' I acted surprised and laid the extra ones on the

table. I did not fool him, however, for he added, 'I have been watching you; in fact, I watched you the other day.' I knew which day he meant, and I suddenly realized that he was the man who had accosted me in the aisle. He had suspected me of theft that day and had remembered my face and clothes. I hurried out with burning face. I bought a new hat to replace the rather conspicuous one which I wore, and was careful to come home by a roundabout way with several transfers to avoid being easily shadowed. I did not want him to know that I belonged at the school.

January 9. — I worried all night over this last escapade. I am wondering how much those music-store people know about me. They might be satisfied with showing me up yesterday; or again, they might wish to prosecute me for what I took the first time. I saw some gold-button men in the school building to-day, and almost died of fright till I saw that they were fire inspectors. I am sure that I must quit this bad business.

January 10. — Two days have passed, and no news from that store. They may have passed over the affair, or may have turned it over to the detective agency (for they are under police protection). It was not reported in the morning papers, although two lifters who had taken less than I have were in court charged with petit larceny. This made me tremble like a leaf as I read it. I have no appetite and look worn with suspense.

Yet I am beginning to hope that I shall be safe. I wrote a compact with God to-day, promising quite a sum to the church if He would save me from this mistake.

January 11. — I could not stand the dread of uncertainty longer. I have written a letter signed 'Conscience' and sent it to the music store with money covering what I have taken. Other

letters will go to the other stores. That is where my uplift list came in handy. I already feel more quiet. I think that I can sleep to-night. To-morrow those 'taken' things will belong to me.

January 12. — I have destroyed the uplift list. There is no longer an ever-growing goal to be reached. My fears for my reputation are stronger than my desire for things. I am glad that God allowed me to be caught, for it was the only way to stop me. My will was not enough. The medicine had to be bitter to be effectual. I know that I shall never try shoplifting again. I am not superstitious, but I am afraid to be caught for the third time. I had proceeded on the theory that the other fellow is a fool — the theory of all thieves.

The evil of the crime has been branded on my heart, not by the eighth commandment, but through fear of the consequences to my health and

professional standing. I know that you can't win.

I have just finished reading the above pages. It seems as if they were the words of another person, surely not mine. I am feeling fine these days. No nights of hot wakefulness, no urge to possess. The luminal bottle is unopened. The school doctor is convinced that at last he has found the right medicine for my condition. I am quite sure that I have found the cure.

It has been a year since I signed my compact with God. He has kept His part of the compact and I shall keep mine. I have something better than thefts and an uplift list on my desk these days. It is a three years' contract with Dr. Raines. But I wish I could forget for one day the shame that still burns in my heart. I have been a thief. It is a punishment worse than Hades.

A LETTER TO CHARLES TOWNSEND COPELAND

BY ROBERT HILLYER

CHARLES, shall we haunt a while that minor Heaven,
Named, more than numbered, Hollis Hall Eleven;
Affright the freshmen, then in turn rejoice
Their ears with echoes of your tempered voice?
Unthinking, as I pass the place at night,
My gaze roves upward to observe your light,
And halts, bedazzled by electric streams
Where in my memory your lamp still gleams.
What a brave host your memory could call
To that dim lighted room in Hollis Hall.
I see the two lamps glowing on the shelves
And books that have become your other selves.
In glimmering ranks, their wit and wisdom spread, —
Friends of your heart, familiars of your head;
And — what to me was more important still —
Musicians of your voice in joinèd skill.
And then I see, as face by face appears —
Some kin to laughter, some aloof from tears —
Your young apprentices of other years.
Some, able to perform as well as learn,
From high entablatures of fame return;
More, though of equal promise, doomed to lose
Their gift in banking, salesmanship, or booze.
Yet even these, when bank directors meet,
Hear echoes from the 'Ballad of the Fleet.'
Or suddenly, through smoke and doubtful stories,
Remember that the Azores are Azorès.
Or quote, and quote it as their own, your line:
To eat is human, to digest divine.
And others come, without reproach or stain,
The ever young, who died — and died in vain;
Yet proved, while shaming Europe's vile pretense,
America's high heart, and innocence.

It is a common error to behold
 In every previous age the age of gold.
 When Norton quit his chair — which was a throne —
 Young Wendell knew that Harvard's day was done.
 He mourned the passing of all learned grace
 Of which he found not one remaining trace
 Among his colleagues, — and his colleagues were
 Young Briggs, young Kittredge, and young Copeland, Sir,
 And many others whose retirement left
 My later age of learned grace bereft.
 Had I not Wendell's letter as a warning,
 I too should don epistolary mourning;
 For, of a truth, the Harvard that I knew
 Needed no distance to enchant the view.
 And memory, that sometimes may enhance,
 But dims the vistas of my backward glance.

As dusk comes on, I almost hope to meet
 Dean Briggs once more in the familiar street,
 His head thrown back, his amiable walk
 Timed equally to progress or to talk.
 I, whom life changes with its every whim,
 Remember now his steadfastness. In him
 Was a perfection, an unworldly grace,
 Life could not mar and death can not efface.
 I know the wrinkled smile, the kindly eyes,
 Keen with a wit both humorous and wise, —
 These I remember, and remembering, see
 The Dean walk home toward immortality.
 The Dean walks home, his cheerful task complete;
 He walks at dusk down the familiar street,
 Stopping to share some story with a friend,
 Or murmur words of counsel. At the end
 He pauses for a moment, and with shy
 Farewell looks back, looks back and says Good-bye;
 Then rounds the corner of his shining days,
 His smile at parting bright through April haze.

By whom shall brilliant minds — and dull — be fired
 (In double sense) now Kittredge has retired?
 The *Beowulf* was no book on a shelf,
 There stood the veteran Beowulf himself!
 The Viking beard, a sail; the nose, a prow;
 Blue eyes the riding lights from here-and-now.
 He'd cruise, head down, hands clasped behind his back,
 With changing winds of thought in veering tack;

Then jibing suddenly full-face, stop short
 And bring his cargo of ideas to port.
 Daring the doubters, how he would expound
 That day-long dive of Beowulf — undrowned.
 Belief in this unscientific story
 Was, to a science-hater, mandatory.
 'They say the Middle Ages were priest-ridden,
 That fantasy was taught, and fact forbidden.
 This may be true, but how much more unpleasant
 A world by science ridden, as at present.
 I'd rather far be ridden, I insist,
 By any priest than by a scientist.'
 A Beowulf in mien, but I miscall
 The scholar who is Shakespeare to them all.

No doubt when Adam delved and Evë span,
 Wendell already was the gentleman,
 The embodied form of that elusive term,
 Its foibles clear, its virtues deep and firm.
 New Englander, with British elegance,
 The culture and the courtesy of France,
 He claimed our so neglected right to use
 The good of Europe, and the bad refuse.
 The while his discourse edified his classes,
 Their frightened gaze pursued his whirling glasses;
 Taut on the string in shortening whorls they flew
 Faster and faster as his interest grew,
 Till on his forefinger completely wound,
 They paused, then whirled the other way around.
 And to this day, of Wendell I recall
 A jeopardy, a voice with dying fall,
 A ducal face, urbane beyond surprise,
 And of all eyes I've seen, the saddest eyes.

It is the function of the truly great
 To fix the letters on time's dimming slate.
 Hence, kings make history we con by rote;
 Republics are mere records of a vote.
 Facts are forgotten soon, unless they can
 Be attributes of a remembered man.
 Subjects too often outweigh the thought,
 The teacher matters more than what is taught.
 And all, the theories and the facts, must be
 Shaped to their place in vast philosophy.

Bliss Perry gave me more than Tennyson,
 And Spaulding, more than melody and tone;
 Had I not studied Bonaparte's campaign
 With Johnston, I had studied it in vain.
 Music I courted, Greek philosophies,
 The Parthenon, exclusive of the frieze, —
 A furious medley, logic put to rout,
 And not one item I could do without.
 Painters of Florence, poets of Japan,
 Course after course, — but more, man after man;
 For fields of interest were not drawn so fine, —
 I moved about, I did not toe the line.
 Thus, Thaxter, the great botanist, with whom
 I never took a course, yet brought to bloom
 Far fairer plants than liverworts or palms, —
 Two charming daughters and a taste for Brahms.
 And Taussig, economics put aside,
 In hospitable plenitude applied
 The theory of supply and of demand
 When freshman appetites got out of hand.
 And Briggs, how did he teach? I can't conjecture;
 Was it example, talk, or formal lecture?

From minds like these how rich has been my yield,
 However foreign may have seemed the field.
 The human mind, of various fibres blent,
 Draws from variety its nourishment,
 Lest it be shrunk inly to a very
 Anatomy of mental dysentery.
 Much narrow learning is but hocus-pocus
 Compared with wars in Spain or the first crocus;
 For men, if education be not vain,
 Must rise with crocuses, not fall with Spain.
 All needful knowledge to the mind impart,
 But better, understanding to the heart.
 The little learning that is dangerous may
 Be having all our learning go one way.
 Toilers by midnight oil will scarce be drawn
 To meet the sun upon the upland lawn,
 And those who hunt mere sources always bungle
 Through literature itself, which is their jungle.
 I know an unknown Restoration drama,
 And whence, verbatim, Emerson got 'Brahma,'
 Whence Pope his 'taste not the Pierian spring,'
 And I can guess what song the sirens sing.

These learned contributions must, however,
Await some far more serious endeavor, —
Till in the *Modern Language Notes* they cumber
Page after page of the Greek Kalends' number.

Charles, you're not listening, and I shall creep
Tiptoe away down corridors of sleep.
I shall go home, and for a penance, mark
A score of themes at random in the dark.
I shall put out the street lamps as I go,
Wrap up the city in a hush of snow,
Turn off all motors, smooth the wind with grease,
Lest you be wakened and reread this piece.
Before your eyelids closed, I saw despair
Flow out and freeze to resignation there;
Bored by the poet, kindly to the friend,
And wishing both of them would make an end.
What! wide awake? 'And watching, Bob. I hope
You are not practising to tread a rope.
Your exit would leave nothing to be said
For burying a man before he's dead.
'Tis not the man I'd pity, but the mourners
Mincing such circumvoluntary corners.
This poem — so to speak — leaves me aghast
By your preoccupation with the past.
Why are the young so old? have they not learned
No chicken's ever to the egg returned?
Let's have no more of that. Let's look ahead.
We can look back a long while when we're dead.
After us, not the deluge, but the sun.
All things must pass, and when good things are done,
It's time that something better were begun.'

THE THREE KEYS

BY JEAN PRÉVOST

THE present state of public opinion in Europe is a source of wonder and dismay to outside observers. Even the most impartial and careful of them refer as a matter of course to a relapse into barbarism.

What, in the cold light of reason, is the meaning of this bombastic affirmation that one man has suddenly become infallible, that a Führer or a Duce can do no wrong? This brand of intolerance is by no means peculiar to Fascism. In Russia, where many of the founders of the Revolution are being persecuted as Trotskyists, there is an accompanying wave of popular feeling, which has no doubt been deliberately provoked, but which has none the less called forth a violent and savage response among the masses.

On the other hand, what is the meaning of this bitter political animosity in a democratic country like France, where it is unaccompanied by persecution or infallibility? To American citizens and newspapers Mr. Roosevelt was, from the day of his election, the President of the United States. Why is it that all the reactionary newspapers in France call M. Blum, not the leader of France, but only the leader of the People's Front?

There is method even in the present European madness. The different states of mind which we have just described all have a common cause which varies within each nation. This common cause is the degree of unity already

attained and the need for further unity felt by each nation.

It should not be forgotten that until 1918 Germany was still made up of various states and dynasties. The Emperor was the great unifying force. In 1919 Germany not only lost this source of unity, but also lost German minorities in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Alsace-Lorraine, and Denmark. Civil strife might have broken the realm into its component parts. The Weimar Republic, which preceded Hitler, unsuccessfully attempted to reestablish German unity. From the day he was victorious, Hitler represented in the eyes of the Germans this unifying force which seemed to them to be the paramount need of their imperiled country. An American or a Frenchman is always surprised to see German friends, who were formerly Republicans, Socialists, or Catholic Democrats, sincerely reconciled to the new régime. The fact is that the Germans do not ask themselves first of all: Is this the best possible form of government? The first thing they ask is: Does this form of government mean unity? Hitler's most effective bit of propaganda was a poster illustrating by means of four portraits the unification of Germany: *the king* (Frederick II) who began it; *the count* (Bismarck) who accomplished it; *the general* (Hindenburg) who saved it; *the soldier* (Hitler) who completed it. In a nation which believes that this unity is a vital necessity, the need becomes a

ruling passion which drives the nation far beyond all reasonable bounds, even to the persecution of Jews and Catholics, and to the fomentation of trouble in peaceful little Denmark.

There is this same need for unity in Russia. The Russian people are still relatively ignorant. Nevertheless, the White Russian insurrections in 1918 and 1919 which aimed to set up independent states in the south or in Siberia, as well as the German and Polish designs upon the Ukraine, have created in Russia, too, a very powerful popular feeling. The unity of the Empire was represented by the Czar and the orthodox religion. When this unity disappeared, Russia became seventeen nations and twenty languages. The Communist rule welds all these elements together. The Russian peasant, or even the industrial worker, has no very clear idea of what Marxism is. Confusedly but surely, however, he knows that for the time being this political doctrine means unity. He yearns violently for unity, because he suffers from the extreme diversity surrounding him. That is the reason why groups of workers go so far as to demand death for political dissenters.

The same thing is true of Italy. Unification was only slightly farther advanced than it was in Germany, when Fascism added the finishing touches. Belief in the personal infallibility of the Duce or the Führer is by no means the temporal equivalent of belief in the spiritual infallibility of the Pope, nor is it, at least in its origins, the sort of worship demanded by the Oriental despot. This acknowledgment of infallibility is inspired first of all by a purely practical consideration: it is better to keep following the same leader, good or mediocre, than to quarrel among ourselves in choosing a new leader.

On the other hand, let us consider a country in which national unity is total,

complete, beyond dispute: France, for example. All France to-day speaks French, administrative centralization is complete, the educational system is more uniform than in any other country. Mobilization was unanimous in 1914; mobilization to-day would be just as unanimous. The real danger for France would be that stagnation without progress which would result were everyone in agreement. It was such a state of affairs, under the constitutional monarchy a century ago, that led the poet and statesman Lamartine to say: '*La France s'ennuie.*'

In France violent opposition groups produce the interchange of ideas, competitive emulation, diversity and mutual criticism, which are a prerequisite to progress. It never occurs to anyone that national unity might be threatened. When a small riot unexpectedly occurred in 1934, the French were so dismayed that for several months they maintained a régime of absolute calm just to prove to their own satisfaction that they did not want a civil war.

Another problem, of a legal and moral rather than political nature, arises from the fact that the *value of the human individual* and the concept of personal rights vary greatly with the different countries of Europe. The French, the English, the Dutch, the Scandinavians, and the Swiss think as the average American citizen does in these matters. On the contrary, in Germany and Italy there has been a depreciation in the value of the human individual.

Germany and Italy have in the past given eminent jurists to the world. How does it happen that all traces of these juridical truths or prejudices have disappeared? The explanation lies in a brutal and widespread fact, the consequences of which it is hard for Americans to realize: overpopulation.

It is a well-known fact that uncivilized countries ordinarily have a stable

population: a high birth rate, counterbalanced by infant mortality, epidemics, and violent deaths. Civilized countries which are heavily populated also tend toward stability, but by means of artificial checks. The clearest example of this is England.

When a nation, however, is already protected by the framework of civilization, without having reached the final stage of conscious control, a period of increasing population occurs. This is the case, at the present time, in Japan; it is the case within the United States, where the Negro population is increasing more rapidly than the white population.

This is also the case in those large European countries which were the last to be civilized: Prussia, Italy, Poland, and Russia. Poland and Russia, however, have at their disposal, as Canada has, vast unexploited resources and possibilities of self-extension, so that the pressure of population creates no immediate danger. In Germany and Italy the population continues to increase and the land can no longer feed its inhabitants. Under these circumstances there is a decline in the juridical sense.

When the land can feed everybody, men experience the benefits of coöperation rather than the dangers of competition. Americans take such a condition for granted. To the visiting European, America is the land of coöperation. As soon as men depend upon one another, there is a rise in the value of human life. Only in the heroic stages of pioneer existence is there an instinctive respect for human life; in the following generation a feeling for law replaces it.

On the contrary, when there are too many men, when the field can no longer feed the family, when workers are reduced to permanent and not merely temporary idleness, then the competitive instinct reappears; human

life loses its value. The loss of a child is a matter of little consequence in a country with a teeming population; the young people in such a country have no normal outlet for their energies, and so acquire a taste for risk and adventure. The Ethiopian expedition, in which the Italians risked ten times as many men as the French or English had ever done in any one of their colonial expeditions, was a matter of astonishment to the rest of the world. An Italian, cynically exaggerating Fascist theories in order to create an effect, remarked: 'Dead men or colonists — no matter, as long as they don't come back.' Hence that terrible indifference to war which is beginning to appear among the Germans and the Italians.

It is but a step from such a state of mind to the attitude of the overpopulated regions of China, where infant mortality is considered a blessing, where no attempt is made to check an epidemic of cholera. Famine would cause as many deaths as the epidemic, and even those who did not die would suffer. Long before such an attitude develops, land and natural resources in overpopulated countries acquire far greater value than men; order becomes more precious than law. Hence that discipline, so astonishing to our traditional liberalism, that total suppression of freedom of thought, and that burden of obligations which characterize the domestic government and social structure of Italy, Germany, and Japan.

Fortunately this increase in population is temporary. The birth rate is decreasing rapidly in Italy and in Germany. In spite of all laws, pride in self-propagation (somewhat naïve, since mice, rabbits, and codfish are infinitely superior to mankind in this respect) will ultimately give way to self-control, and stability will be attained. A reputable Japanese ethnographer, Professor Uyeda, has already placed the maximum population of Japan at eighty million.

Do the foregoing statements mean that countries like England and France, which are sure of their unity and which have a stable population, are absolutely free from any sort of psychosis? Have they not, like the other European nations, some mental maladjustment?

I believe they have. I believe, specifically, that their crying need of security has very frequently, since the war, made them unhappy. The Frenchman's characteristic fault (which is sometimes carried to the point of avarice) is his tendency to spend the better part of his youth in planning for calm and comfortable old age. At the present time fluctuations in the value of money, economic exchanges, and taxes have created a situation in which no sort of property can guarantee to anyone this security in old age. Since these upheavals have been linked to foreign events, the Frenchman's present ideal in matters of foreign policy is inaction. The English desire the same thing, because they are the most favored nation in Europe and because any change would mean a loss to them. The French want the landowner's security; the English, the business man's security. Thus public opinion is paralyzed, rendered apprehensive and negative.

The need for unity, overpopulation, the need for security — these are, I believe, the three keys to the political thinking of Europe. Economic quarrels, discussions about raw materials, are only pretexts, excuses for irritation. Europe is spending each year for armaments three times the value of the stakes in these economic quarrels.

What practical conclusions can be drawn from this analysis?

First of all, the present line-up of the Powers is inevitable and lasting: on one side the conquering Powers, Germany, Italy, Japan; on the other, the pacific Powers, England, France, and the small

nations. By the same token it is logical that Russia, a country with no external needs, should swing toward the French-English bloc.

Furthermore, European problems are by no means hopeless, nor beyond human powers of foresight and action. The need for unity, if it is not interfered with by threats from abroad, will calm down of itself and will cease to breed intolerance. The two crises in the unity of France and the United States — the French Revolution and the American Civil War — were accompanied by intolerance and violence; but when unity was once assured, liberty and tolerance reappeared.

Finally, if our liberal ideas are shocked by the lack of respect for human life, the imperialism, and the warlike tendencies of Germany, Italy, and Japan, we should remember that these vagaries are born of a very real, painful, and legitimate need: the necessity of finding a means of livelihood for overcrowded nations.

War is not the only means of satisfying this need. In the nineteenth century, emigration enabled surplus Italians and Germans to find a livelihood elsewhere. The United States immigration laws, which were soon copied by other American countries and by the British dominions, render the United States partly responsible for the present sufferings and perils of Europe. It is of course impossible at this time to consider brutally throwing open the doors to immigrants. There are, however, more gentle and gradual measures, such as admission into the colonies, temporary immigration, and commercial exchanges, which might solve this problem. It is only temporary. In fifty years natural stabilization will have solved it. Must this small thorn in Europe's flesh be the cause of a new war which would mean the death of Europe, and perhaps the rest of Occidental civilization?

IN A GERMAN RAILWAY CARRIAGE

BY AN AMERICAN PROFESSOR

I

THE rain was falling more and more steadily. With the end of the *London Times* I wiped a clear spot on the window and assured myself that the German peasants were admitting defeat for that day and starting homeward. Here and there one who had more feel for weather than his fellows was already approaching a little red-roofed village, his oxen plodding at exactly the same rate as though the May sun were shining on them; sometimes the wife walked on ahead, less patient than the males, her white headkerchief a bright dot even in the rain.

The man across from me, in the opposite seat, was old — not so old in years, perhaps, but in what some of the years had done to him. Every feature sagged; he was not really fat, but he covered all of the thin cushion he had put on the wooden seat. He looked out the window at the rain with a face that seemed to have been expressionless a long time.

'Looks like good soil here,' I said.

'Yes,' he replied, 'this is good country. You are an Englishman?'

'No, American.'

'Going to Leipzig?'

'Yes.'

'Where have you come from?'

'I left Paris yesterday morning. Everything seemed quiet enough.'

'Don't you believe it! The French will find out what it means to tie up to Soviet Russia! We are the only coun-

try in the world who understand the situation. You in America have no conception of the danger you are in. You will have more strikes, too. It's only in Germany that those things can't happen.'

I nodded. I could n't argue with him. He had learned his lesson well, word for word. Why should I, a foreigner, make him repeat it?

I offered him a cigarette, lighted his and mine, and we smoked in silence. The young German who entered shortly with 'Heil Hitler!' seemed to feel the silence and buried himself in a collection of illustrated weeklies. In the course of time, however, he had exhausted his resources and felt drawn to conversation. He held up to view a magazine whose front page was an almost life-size photograph of Hitler.

'The newest picture,' he assured us. 'Is n't it beautiful?'

There was certainly no malevolence in that gentle face with its childlike bright eyes. But did he really expect an answer?

'I scarcely think anyone could call him really beautiful,' I said.

The young man still wore his friendly smile; apparently my tone had been sufficiently objective.

'But there is something so wonderful about his face,' he explained. 'So of another world, so individual . . .'

The train stopped at a small country station. A well-scrubbed, energetic

young woman entered the compartment with a clearly articulated 'Heil Hitler!' Our responses varied. The newcomer at once heard that I was a foreigner, an American, and lost no time getting to work.

'Your first visit to Germany?'

'Yes.'

'And what do you think of it all?'

'I think it's a beautiful country — at least here in the south.'

'And the rest of it — the people, our new life here?'

'I have n't been here long enough yet to feel that I understand just what is really going on.'

'But surely you see how united we all are behind our wonderful Leader. Nowhere else in the world is there such loyalty, such unselfish devotion, such joy!'

'Then it seems strange,' I replied, 'that the people look so sad and so without hope — the people in the subways, on the streets, in the shops.'

'Oh, but you're mistaken! The people look happy. The occasional individual, of course, may have his private cares, but the mass of the people have pride and joy in their faces.'

'No,' I insisted, having started the thing, 'it's the occasional individual who may have something pleasant to think about. The mass of the people look very depressed. It's quite striking.'

'Well, that can be only the effect of foreign propaganda,' she explained. 'You read before you came here that our people were poor and miserable. That's the only explanation of your not seeing what is so evident. Our young people are getting such splendid training now! I've just come from one of the work camps for girls; have you heard about them?'

Fortunately I had heard about them. I jumped at the chance to show her that I was not entirely prejudiced.

'I find it very interesting that they

are compulsory for girls who want to attend a university. The world has had too many women, this last generation or so, who knew their books and nothing else. But do you think it's wise to give these young girls only six hours' sleep and no time for reading or recreation or relaxation?'

'But they have plenty of time for relaxation. They rest an hour every day after dinner. And every evening after supper they sing songs. They don't need to read; there are plenty of lectures during the late afternoon and evening. And as to their getting up at quarter of five every morning, country people have to do that, of course, and it's splendid to be able to do so much work. You in America, where you have everything, don't feel your responsibilities. Here in Germany, a poor country, under Adolf Hitler everyone is taken care of; everyone, whoever he may be, has all he needs. In your country, if a man is out of work, no one bothers about him. He can starve to death and nobody cares.'

It was my turn to be startled. 'Where did you get any such idea as that? We have spent billions of dollars for relief. The unemployed man in America, if he has a family, gets more than the man who works fifty-three hours a week on your auto highways.'

'You have doubtless given plenty of money,' she said, 'but there's no system, no organization. No one really cares, as Adolf Hitler does here in Germany!'

She was gathering up her things; I was glad her trip had been short; I might have become indiscreet.

Again we rode in silence. Rain continued to cloud the windows. I eyed the young German.

'I'm afraid I did n't make my meaning really clear when I was talking to the young lady,' I told him. 'What I was trying to say was that in some

countries we think it is too bad for a man or woman to have to work such long hours to make a living that he is too tired to be able to think about anything else.'

He was struggling into his raincoat, still amiable. 'I can see that,' he said. 'That's something to talk over with my sister. I wish you a pleasant journey. Heil Hitler!'

II

The train drew to a stop, more slowly than usual.

'Grüss Gott!'

The man who stood in the doorway radiated health, confidence, success. His face was round, his smile infectious; his cheeks and his necktie were red; his black and white checked suit would have satisfied my freshman son. The diamond on his finger was conspicuously genuine.

He sat down beside the old gentleman and produced a newspaper on which Mussolini and Paris were the two most striking words. Again the old gentleman prepared to do his duty.

'These strikes in Paris! The French will find out what it means to tie up to Soviet Russia.'

The other man eyed him, nodded slowly, and smiled genially.

'Yes, the French will find out. The French have learned from us; they know they'll be a lot better off to tie up with Soviet Russia than to get into the mess we've got ourselves into!'

The old gentleman made almost a quarter turn on his cushion. I hope I looked less startled than he, but I was conscious of a distinct sensation at the roots of my hair. The old gentleman apparently did not believe his ears.

'But we are safe from Communists. No Communist can get foothold in Germany.'

'What difference does it make what

name you give them? What evils are there in Communism that we don't have here in Germany, in a country whose standards of living, of education, of culture, were immeasurably higher than those of Russia? Are n't we, too, controlled by terrorism, by force of arms and sheer brutality? How can any intelligent man think that anything based on physical force alone can endure?'

'But the French! What do they understand about anything?'

'The French have no capacity for painstaking research, of course; they are n't the scientists we are; they can't build dirigibles; they can't write symphonies; they know nothing about organization. But when it comes to understanding human nature, they're a lot cleverer than we dumb Germans are! When anyone pipes,' he made the appropriate gesture, 'we dance!'

'As soldiers they'll never be our equals.'

'Soldiers? War? What difference does that make? When did war really settle anything? In 1914 I was a student in England; I was spending a holiday at home when the war broke out; I could have been over the border in no time. But I joined up instead, young fool that I was! I was wounded four times; five months I was blind from gas — but then, that did n't matter. But look at the world to-day! Don't you see that it's impossible for any country, even if it calls itself victorious in war, to win as much as it is bound to lose?'

'You're probably right about that,' the old man admitted, 'but you certainly know that in order to have efficient government . . .'

'What do I care what form of government they have? They may organize it as they like, give it any name they like, as long as there are honest men running it. But a rogue is a rogue. Communist, Monarchist, Social Demo-

crat, Jew, Mohammedan, Christian, or National Socialist — a rogue is still a rogue!

The older man had met more than his equal. He could only nod and murmur, 'Yes, you're right, you're right.'

But the younger one was not satisfied merely to have quieted the opposition. He went on: 'An honest man may make a mistake. I may be sure I can accomplish a certain thing and promise someone that I will do it. And then circumstances change; something may occur to upset all my calculations, and I may find I can't do what I promised to do. What then? Why — being an honest man, I can go to that person and say, "My friend, I thought I could do thus and so, but for such and such reasons I find I can't. I am very sorry, but, things being as they are, we shall have to make new plans and do the best we can under the circumstances."

'But if I stand up,' and in his eagerness our friend jumped to his feet, struck an heroic attitude, and pulled his hair down over one eye, 'and say, "I have given my people work! I have given my people bread!" — then I'm nothing but a common liar!'

He sat down again and grinned across at me.

'And of course, in addition to honesty, it would be desirable to have a little common sense. In the complicated world of to-day, where whatever happens in one country has some effect upon the economic and industrial life of every other country, we can make progress only by all working together — people all over the world working together. For one man to say, "I know all the answers! I can give my people peace and prosperity and independence and happiness" — that's sheer presumption — sheer presumption!'

At last he came to a full stop and leaned back in the corner next to the door. But he was not watching the

occasional passer-by in the corridor. Who was this man who dared, in loud, clear tones, without peering into the compartment on either side to see who might be listening, to say a dozen things any one of which was enough to put him in a concentration camp? Thousands of men had disappeared for whispering to their 'friends' just one such statement. Through letters of introduction, I had met men who told me confidentially that they and many others were not behind Hitler, and were grieved and horrified at what he was doing to Germany as a nation and the German people as individuals. I knew that the vaunted unity was a tragic farce. Was this man a Nazi agent who would hand the old gentleman (who *had* said, 'Yes, you're right, you're right') over to the Leipzig secret police? But certainly no Nazi agent would say such things in front of a foreigner, even to trap a tired old man.

The old gentleman, too, was wondering about him.

'You know this country around here?' he inquired.

'Oh yes, I know every bit of it. I live in Leipzig. I make most of my trips around in my car, but this morning my wife wanted it, so I came down by train — good thing, too, the way it turned out.'

He smiled at the streaming windows. So in Nazi Germany he was getting along well enough to drive a car!

'These new auto highways — they're grand, I suppose?' The old gentleman evidently neither had a car of his own nor rode with friends.

'The new auto highways are a menace and a curse! I steer clear of them! Straight across country, mile after mile you sit there with your foot on the accelerator, and the fellow ahead of you and the fellow behind you all do the same. Somebody goes to sleep just because there's nothing interesting

enough to keep him awake. Bang! Then if you're still alive you go to court.'

'But they have given work to a lot of people; they've done that much good, have n't they?'

'Work? Forced labor, nothing more nor less. Fifty-three hours a week, and not enough pay to buy bread for your family. That's not "work"!'

III

Our conversation was at an end. The train had stopped again and the corridor was full of passengers looking for convenient seats. With successive 'Heil Hitlers' four people settled themselves, their suitcases, and their rain-coats among us: an erect, tight-lipped business man and his bustling, full-skirted, pleasant-faced *Hausfrau* of a wife; a tailor-made spinster who was certainly a retired school-teacher; a short, thickset, black-haired man who settled himself in the corner, across from our prosperous friend. And then came the fifth, a young soldier, one of the military service boys, in his natty gray uniform that in the World War would have been good enough for an officer. He put his cap up between the suitcases and fitted himself into the vacant space beside the checked suit. With regret I decided that the unmistakable smell of spirits that pervaded the compartment came from his breath. He sat with his hands between his knees and his attention apparently focused upon the toes of his boots.

The dark man seemed to be interested in soldiers.

'What camp are you from?' he asked.

The boy gave the name, but it escaped me; foreign names are hard to catch.

'I suppose you are going home on leave? To Leipzig?'

The boy looked up. 'Yes, and I've

a good mind not to go back. "Adolf Hitler! Adolf Hitler!" March and drill and learn to hate everybody but yourselves! Then more "Adolf Hitler!" Does the little Austrian think he owns us, body and soul?'

My rosy-cheeked friend was not smiling now. He laid a hand on the boy's arm.

'You've been drinking, son,' he said. 'You'd better keep quiet until you get over it.'

The young German looked at the older man. He opened his mouth, then closed it again, silently. Then he resumed his former attitude, with lowered head. Soon he stood up and, without looking at any of us, made his way into the corridor and out of sight.

The dark man in the corner next to the door crossed his legs and chuckled.

'When he gets to Leipzig, the police will have something to say to him. Sitting there in the uniform of the Fatherland, talking like that of our Leader!'

Silence was the only answer to his remark. Each passenger was evidently occupied with his own thoughts. No one read, no one smoked. The rain, sliding down the window, was the only thing that moved. At last the gentleman in the checked suit arose and stretched himself, sauntered out into the corridor, looked out into the rain on that side, then disappeared. He returned after a short time, stood in the doorway and looked at us all with a friendly smile, then sat down and lighted a cigarette. But the young soldier did not come back. The train continued its rather leisurely way, stopping here and there, but all our fellow travelers were apparently bound for Leipzig. There were seven of us, and the soldier's cap up with the baggage — and we were getting nearer and nearer to Leipzig.

Finally the man who put his faith in the police got up and left us. As soon as

he was out of sight our prosperous-looking friend took down the soldier's cap, stuffed it into his brief case, and resumed his nonchalant attitude. In a very few minutes the dark man was back, and at once he saw that the cap had disappeared.

'Aha! He's been back. What's become of him?'

My friend was perfectly leisurely in the way he took his cigarette from his mouth and flicked the ashes into the receptacle.

'He said something about being hungry. You'll probably find him in the diner.'

Are there those who deny that a lie can be perfectly and absolutely white?

The dark man sat down, but he was restless. Ten minutes before we reached Leipzig he had gathered together his brief case, his suitcase, and his raincoat and was standing in the corridor at the forward end of the car. The rest of us followed his example, got our belongings together, and without a single 'Heil Hitler!' filed into the corridor. I managed to keep my place behind my mysterious friend.

Before the train had really stopped, the dark man had jumped to the platform and was running toward the gate. When we passed through the gate, he was standing on one side of it; on the other side were two policemen, their attention divided between the informer and the line of approaching passengers.

I kept abreast of my friend; I wondered when I should dare ask the question that kept me from saying anything else. Finally he laughed.

'If they wanted that boy, they should have been some fifty kilometres down the track an hour ago. They're in for a big disappointment.'

'But what became of him?'

'Oh, he got off the train at one of

those little stations out in the country. He came to the conclusion it would be healthier there than in Leipzig to-day,' and he laughed again.

'It's lucky that man did n't choose that particular moment to go out into the corridor; he might have chased him down the platform and there would have been a hullabaloo.'

'Never a chance! The youngster did n't go by way of the platform. He went out of the window on the other side. We put him in a second-class compartment that happened to be vacant, in the next coach; I pulled down the curtains and the conductor locked the door. When he opened it as we were leaving the next station, the compartment was empty. He nodded to me the next time he went along the corridor, so I knew it worked all right. You don't need to worry about that young man to-day, my friend!'

'The conductor!' I gasped.

'Yes, the conductor; they're mostly good fellows.'

We had stopped in front of the large map of the city of Leipzig. The gentleman turned around and stood as though waiting for someone.

'But the cap?' I asked.

'I'm waiting until the conductor comes along,' he replied. 'I'll take him over to get a glass of beer in a little place near here, and slip the cap to him there. He'll get it back either to that boy or to one of his buddies; they go back and forth here all the time. The boy'll get his cap almost before he misses it.'

He extended his hand.

'*Grüss Gott,*' he said with that same genial smile.

'*Grüss Gott!*' I replied. '*Und auf Wiedersehen!*'

I never saw him again, of course, but I hope that God has watched over him in present-day Germany.

THE DOWNSTAIRS BEDROOM

BY WINIFRED WELLES

ALMOST all New England houses had a bedroom on the first floor, sometimes called the parlor bedroom, or the downstairs bedroom. Often, in addition, it was the spare room, used only for guests.

In our house, the downstairs bedroom was at the end of the hall behind the parlor, a large room with one window opening into the back yard and two facing the drive at the north side of the house, with a pleasant view through the trunks of the trees across Miss Bateman's lawn up the street. One door opened into it from the hall, and another led out into a long cold storeroom with a door at the end, from which two steps led down into an open, arched passage with a stone floor, which connected the house with the woodshed.

After my grandmother died, my grandfather always occupied the downstairs bedroom, and it was spacious enough to serve him as a study as well as a sleeping room. His tall mahogany secretary with the glass doors in the top, divided into diamond-shaped panes, stood between the two windows. There were bookcases near at hand in the corner, and also his 'whirligig,' a wooden stand of open shelves revolving on a central standard, which held more books and papers. In the other corner, by the one window at the back, stood his washstand, with pitcher and bowl, and against the wall at that end of the room his massive Victorian bed, with

the huge ugly walnut headboard. He always used a Windsor armchair at his secretary, and in front of the fireplace, with the black marble clock on the mantel, were grouped other big chairs of the ample, stuffed type, and a rocker, all of them a little shabby from hours of comfortable ease. In winter, a big iron stove stood on the hearth, its isinglass doors fiery and glowing, its black sides radiating enough heat to warm every part of the room except the space near the storeroom door, which was always a trifle drafty.

To that downstairs bedroom came not only the family and friends and legal associates, but occasionally some odd and rather startling guests. At that time my mother was an unmarried woman still quite contentedly close enough to girlhood to be spoken of as 'a daughter in her father's house,' a designation which implied dignity and some maturity, but not yet a position of hopeless spinsterhood. Once late at night, upstairs in bed, she heard unusual sounds in the hall below, steps pacing back and forth, voices speaking in undertones. Wondering uneasily if 'Father was all right,' she pulled on her dressing gown, and went and stood unseen in the dimness at the head of the stairs. Below her, she watched her father and a man strange to her — who, she learned the next day, was a well-known thief — going through the motions of a curious little performance. My grandfather had doubted the testi-

mony of some witnesses as to the possibility of a man's watch being spirited away out of his pocket by fingers so agile that the man could remain completely unconscious of his loss. So this expert had been called in to give a private and personal demonstration of professional pocket-picking.

Here too came Mrs. Crawford, the Norwich Town woman accused of poisoning her husband by slipping arsenic daily into his breakfast coffee until her purpose was accomplished. In those days of his criminal law practice, my grandfather defended all sorts of supposed malefactors, but he never did so unless he had some assurance of their innocence. He led her into the downstairs bedroom and seated her politely in the rocker by the stove, while he paced the quiet room for a moment, his hands behind his back. Then he faced her, and, no doubt with full recognition of the histrionic element in his appeal, said harshly: —

'Now, Mrs. Crawford, there is no one in this room but you, and me, and God Almighty. Are you a guilty woman, or are you innocent?'

Unquivering, she looked him squarely in his blazing blue eyes as she raised her hand.

'Mr. Hoyt,' she replied, 'before God Almighty, I am innocent.'

'God Almighty' was a name often invoked by my grandfather in as many ways as he had emotions. If out of temper with the weather, — and he always was the instant that he saw the rain start to drip or the snow to fall, — he would work himself up into an absurd but perfectly genuine passion, and, standing at door or window, his face purple, shaking his clenched fists above his head, he would explode with: —

'Any fool could run this universe better than God Almighty.'

But if the weather was fine, and he felt fit, and things were going his way,

then his exuberant high spirits would allow him to be on better terms with his Maker. Such a moment occurred one morning in court, when he was opposed by two lawyers named Jeremiah Lathrop and Solomon Brewer, whose arguments were long, dreary, and pompous. When, at last, they were done, he rose quickly to his feet and turned to the jury with a wicked spark in his eye.

'Gentlemen,' he remarked, 'you have just listened to the lamentations of Jeremiah, and the wisdom of Solomon. Now prepare to hear the Lord God Almighty.'

There were many sides to his nature, elements as contradictory as his love of fine china and his delight in coarse anecdotes. As a younger man, he occasionally turned literary, like almost everyone else in Connecticut. To his delight, one of his efforts appeared in print, together with the offerings of others, in a small book, published in Hartford, called *The Moss Rose*. Most of the contributions were in verse, but his was a prose piece, a highfaluting mediæval romance with the title of 'Clarence de Courcy.' The style and the sentiments were in complete contrast to his racy, cynical, and often profane conversation.

All women interested and attracted him, but he had a special admiration for the intellectual woman, seeking out such literary ladies in Connecticut as Lydia Huntley Sigourney, 'the poetess,' and Mary Perkins, who wrote historical sketches. Perhaps this was due to his mother, Felicity, who, like many other eighteenth-century ladies, wrote long and carefully composed letters. On the other hand he often burst out in praise of some matron as 'a great, splendid, double-breasted, flat-bottomed creature' — that Victorian phrase which was scarcely suggestive of a mental type. Certainly his wife, Elizabeth, and his daughter, Mary, were not literary, and also neither bore any re-

semblance to the Amazonian warrior suggested by his description of another kind of woman. But evidently Mary's companionship sufficed after Elizabeth's death, for he never remarried. If she lacked bookishness, she shared his keen appreciation of personalities, and both possessed, to an astonishing degree, the power of charming and managing people. But in this respect their natures, if alike, also diverged, for his democratic tastes led him anywhere and everywhere, while Mary, like her grandmother, had many of the characteristics of a snob. This she knew and even admitted with considerable pride. 'If I had money enough,' she would say with that arrogant lifting of her lovely head, 'I should be a complete snob.'

The rich aristocrats and the humble working people of her time she understood and accepted, but between those two extremes — in that wide expanse of the commonplace, which abounded in so much smugness, pretentiousness, and false gentility — there she moved with complete and cold disdain.

My grandfather swallowed life whole, with both palate and digestion strong enough to savor and digest the entire mixture of ingredients. He watched and welcomed with tireless interest the changes in his town, his state, and his nation.

During his long lifetime he saw the Irish pouring into Connecticut in great numbers, and they were a people in whom he had faith, and whom he understood. He used to boast that he could remember the day when there had been The Irishman in Norwich, and people went to inspect him as though he were a singular kind of beast. But that first bizarre specimen swiftly multiplied into hordes. They were then the hod carriers, the ditch-diggers, and at best the servants. Illiterate, uncouth, they passed the house swinging their black lunch boxes, smok-

ing their vile-smelling, stubby pipes, enlivening the street with their rich voices and their incomprehensible speech, which somehow always rose and fell with the rhythms of poetry. Standing waist-deep in ditches by the roadside, they lifted those broad, droll faces with the small, sharp eyes, and the immensely long upper lips, grinning and spitting, queer as leprechauns in this sedate Yankee town.

My grandfather lived to see them dig themselves out of the ditches to walk abreast with the descendants of the earliest settlers, their children and their grandchildren become dressmakers, contractors, lawyers, and business men. The brogue disappeared, and the comical facial contours softened and sobered, but the coarse and fiery strength remained to be poured into restless ambition that drove them everywhere. And fire and coarseness and restless ambition were the very core of my grandfather's own heart.

His memory ranged back a long way into the history of his country. Felicity had told him vivid tales of the Revolution, and he himself, as a tiny child, dimly remembered the War of 1812. The Civil War had taken his only son, Philip, and just how deeply that blow struck into him he never wholly confided to anyone. But, unlike his wife, he did not allow it to kill him. Somehow he made peace with his own heart and went on, more eagerly than ever, with his energetic life.

He wanted more than anything to be governor of his state, to stand at the head of his well-loved 'old Connecticut.' More than any other, that honor, he felt, would set the perfect seal on both his youthful dreams and his manhood's labor. And he also often expressed the wish to live to be a hundred, to see the turn of his own century. But he did not realize either ambition.

Before he died, he lay almost two

years in that wide walnut bed in the downstairs bedroom, slipping away from earth very quietly and gently for one who had lived with such fierce activity. But his family was around him; even Ned and I had been born; and my mother nursed him herself, caring for the frail old man as tenderly and as conscientiously as she had for her babies when they were small and helpless. He wanted no one near him but herself, but her he wanted almost constantly, ringing for her, wherever she might be at her other tasks in the house, with a big brass bell kept on a table at his bedside. Her patient devotion seemed inexhaustible, and often, as she came to him, to bathe or rub or merely soothe him, he would say to her, as he had said so many times during the long years: —

‘Mary, you’re one woman in ten thousand.’

Lying there in the downstairs bedroom, he was far less remote and lonely than he would have been anywhere else in the house. So close to kitchen, woodshed, and driveway, he could listen to all the small, important household noises — tradesmen, coming and going, Hannah bustling in the kitchen, the calls and laughter of his grandchildren, Mary’s quick steps just outside in the hall, or up and down the stairs. Winter days, the azure coals would hiss softly in the big stove, and out on the road he could hear the bells on the sleighs, sweetly ringing as they passed, or the slow wheels of carts creaking over the packed snow. Summer evenings with the windows opened, the light breeze in the deepening twilight stirred the leaves in the maple trees — those trees that he had planted himself so long ago.

Before his increasing feebleness had forced him into bed, he had liked to sit on the small front stoop those summer evenings, and watch the people passing on bicycles, those curious ‘new-fangled

contraptions’ which were ridden, not only by men, but — astonishing sight even without bloomers! — by women, too. He always counted them, and when he went in for the night told the number to his daughter.

‘Well, Mary, I counted fifty-seven to-night.’

What a world! What was it coming to? If he only knew, if only he could wait to see and hear and share in its destiny — in all its destinies.

After he went to bed, he spoke less and less. He who had been so voluble, whose words had been dramatized with such imagination and variety by his mobile face and the gestures of his small, shapely hands, of which he was so proud, now lapsed into silence. Only once in a while his spirit flickered up in some momentary reminder of its former bright flare.

One day I passed through his room on my way to play in the woodshed. He did not object now if my brothers and I went in and out. His desk, where he had so hated interruptions, was closed forever, and the papers on the whirligig lay neat and undisturbed. I was a pudgy little girl by this time, with legs rounding out under my starched gingham dress, and two braids of flaxen hair bobbing at my shoulders. My mother, sitting by his bed stirring a glass of medicine, watched the old man’s gaze as it followed me across the room and through the door. For a brief instant in those fading eyes she caught a ghostly glimmer of the old sparkle. She said quickly, bending towards him: —

‘What are you thinking about, Father?’

Very slowly he replied in the hoarse whisper which was all that remained of his voice: —

‘I was — just thinking — possibly — some day — that *that*’ — he nodded in the direction I had taken — ‘might make — a very showy woman.’

WHEN PHYSICS GOES FARMING

BY GEORGE R. HARRISON

'The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.' — Book of Isaiah

I

A FARM is a factory where the energy of light is used to make cheap simple molecules into valuable complex molecules. In another sense it is a packaging establishment where energy from sunlight is bottled up in the molecules of matter and held for future use. Farming is thus both a chemical and a physical process. That chemists have had much to contribute to the development of new agricultural methods is well recognized; that farmers need physicists to aid them is equally true but not so obvious.

Agriculture, the world's greatest industry, is still in the era of its development which corresponds to that of the sailing ship in transoceanic commerce. The continued existence of two billion humans depends on what the land produces, and two out of every three people draw their livelihood from farms, but farming still remains in most instances a backbreaking, discouraging process of slim and uncertain profit. An annual return of eighty dollars from an acre of land chosen at random is still considered princely; seventeen dollars is the average gross return. After long hours of labor, the farmer and his family may, if their sprouting seeds are not eaten by birds and insects, washed away by floods, blown away by winds, or withered by drouths, produce a crop for which the demand has vanished because of overproduction.

Perhaps the art of agriculture has not felt the need of scientific methods more acutely because it has always had something of the character of a free lunch. The passing motorist picking the farmer's apples at the roadside considers himself merely sharing in the gifts of Providence. Seeds cost nothing, since any apple core in the street is filled with them; plant a seed, let the heavens water it and the blessed sun shine upon it, and pick your apples when they ripen! The newly embarked agriculturist frequently feels the same emotional response to the call of the soil. Twenty years later, if he is still farming, his response has usually been considerably modified.

The cheapest way often is not the most economical. The winds blow free across the seas, but it is cheaper to spend \$10,000 on oil to send a liner from New York to Liverpool than it is to fit the same vessel out with \$2000 worth of sails and accept the freedom of the winds. The original farmer merely picked his crops where he found them growing wild, as the first boatman floated on his log wherever the current carried it. Then the farmer scratched his land and sowed his seed, and the boatman learned to paddle with a stick. When the boatman invented a sail, the farmer matched him with an irrigation ditch. Then the sailor called in the scientist to help

him, or rather found the apparatus produced by science forced upon him by economic necessity. The farmer with ambition feels that he too has become very scientific during the last thirty years. His experiments with scientific farming are as yet, however, but as a chugging paddle-wheeled ferry compared to the steamboat whose smoke is now becoming discernible.

Plant growth has four basic needs: light, air, water, and a comparatively small supply of such chemical elements as magnesium, phosphorus, sulphur, silicon, and others. The plant takes from the air the materials which it needs most to build its structure. Since the chemical reactions within its cells must take place in solution, water is stored in them and the turgidity of these cells gives rigidity to the plant structure. Light furnishes the energy with which the plant abstracts carbon atoms from carbon dioxide molecules taken from the air. With these carbon atoms and hydrogen and oxygen atoms from water and air, the plant builds starches and sugars which furnish most of the chemical energy used by man. In addition to its edible components, the plant also synthesizes cellulose materials which man burns, saws, spins, and otherwise shapes to his advantage.

All this sounds very chemical, but once the proper fertilizing ingredients have been added to the soil (if not already present) the plant carries out these chemical operations most effectively, and the chemist comes into the picture largely in connection with utilization of the crop. The great primary problems of farming, apart from fertility, involve investigating and controlling temperature, light intensity, soil mechanics, and water application and disposal, all of which are problems of physics and its derivative sciences.

The full time of a few physicists is now being given to research designed

to improve agriculture; the field would justify the attention of many more. The agricultural income of the United States was about \$5,000,000,000 in 1935. With less land in use than at present, but with the use of improved methods, this income could be increased manyfold. Increasing agricultural efficiency is not essentially different from designing more efficient light sources or learning how to telephone greater distances — it merely requires coöperative research in a greater variety of sciences.

If fresh ripe cherries are desired in Maine in February, there are three ways to provide them. The fruit could be brought at high speed from Australia or the Argentine or anywhere else where cherries are ripe in February; improvements in transportation are needed to make such hauling profitable. Or the cherries could be raised wherever cherries will grow, picked whenever they ripen, and then kept until February by some method which would preserve them unchanged for at least six months — a cherry which cannot be distinguished from a fresh cherry *is* a fresh cherry to its consumer. Or the cherries could be raised in Maine in February by treating the cherry trees in some such way that they would feel June weather about them. All three of these methods are at present in promising stages of development, and the principal requisite needed to make them economically practicable is cheaper energy. In fact, if electrical energy could be delivered to farms at the rate at which it is now sold wholesale to industrialists near large power-producing plants, a rate less than one tenth what the average farmer has to pay, the second and third methods would now be feasible and profitable. That rural power could be made cheaper by proper organization is emphasized by the fact that nine tenths of the average electric power bill is paid, not for power, but

for the privilege of turning it on or off at any time.

The United States is woefully behind the times in farm electrification even for such obvious things as water pumping, wood sawing, and the thousand other tasks that for years have added to the drudgery of farm life. When a man saws wood by hand, he is earning five cents an hour, which is what it costs on the average to have electricity do the same job. In Switzerland 98 per cent of the farms have electric power, while in Sweden almost half of all farms are so equipped; in this country not more than 4 per cent of farms are wired for electricity, in spite of the fact that the United States uses four times as much electric power per person as the rest of the world and that its domestic and industrial power consumption is climbing steadily. On one farm of 600 acres in England only two horses are kept, while over sixty different uses are made of electricity. In Holland that picturesque feature of the landscape, the windmill, which has furnished cheap power for so many years, is rapidly being displaced by electric motors which are fed power generated from Russian coal. The number of windmills has been cut in half, and by going to the additional expense of importing coal the Dutch market gardeners have been set free from the vagaries of wind and weather to such an extent that they have been able to capture much of the fresh vegetable market of Great Britain previously held by Italy.

The use of artificial light to supplement rather than to supplant sunlight has been found of economic advantage, both to hasten and to retard the maturing of flowers and fruits. The sunlight falling on a square yard of garden surface costs three cents an hour to duplicate electrically, a figure which amounts to over \$100 per acre per day. Artificial light may profitably serve to eke out sunlight on dark days and

sometimes during the night, but electrical energy cannot compete directly with solar energy until its cost has been greatly decreased.

II

The chief practical use for artificial light at present is in advancing the maturing date of flowers. Forcing lilies for Easter is an old trick, and proper illumination will expedite blooming by as much as a month. Sweet peas have been made to bloom five weeks in advance of normal by means of artificial light. One type of clover which scientists of the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research in Yonkers, New York, found ordinarily required two years to come to bloom was brought to flower in one tenth of this time under artificial light. Forcing by means of light appears more suitable than forcing by other means, as it is accompanied neither by a loss of color or fragrance in the case of flowers nor by a loss of color or flavor in the case of fruits.

Some plants thrive on a long working day, while others respond best to a short day. Chrysanthemums, which tend to bloom too soon for the best market, can be retarded by giving them extra-long days of growing under artificial light. Plants which bloom in midsummer like a long day; those which bloom in spring or autumn like a day of medium length; those which bloom all the year round appreciate shade once in a while when the days are long. Light judiciously applied makes flowers and fruits more brilliant and colorful. But lots of light must be used; the five or ten foot-candles of artificial light provided in the average living room is negligible compared to the two to ten thousand foot-candles a plant gets from the sun out in the open.

Filtered light may be useful, as some plants are injured by the heat content

of solar radiation. Only one fifteenth of the energy in the light from the sun is of the proper colors to be used by plants; the remaining 93 per cent serves only for heating air and soil, and may burn delicate plant tissue. In the future we may see greenhouses with clear glass above, to let in as much radiation as possible, and with internal amber glass shields over certain plants to protect them from the heating rays while allowing the useful colors to pass.

That all colors of light are not equally effective in promoting plant growth may be inferred from the fact that leaves are bluish green in color. The absorption of light by chlorophyll and by both dead and living plant leaves has been carefully studied with the spectroscope, and red has been found to be the color most vigorously absorbed and utilized.

By growing similar plants under conditions identical except as to illumination, one group of plants being under blue light, another group under red, with others bathed in infrared and ultraviolet respectively, it has been found that such widely differing varieties of plant life as the buckwheat and the green scum which grows in stagnant ponds respond similarly to light stimulation. Biophysicists have found that yellow light from an incandescent lamp will stimulate growth half again as fast as blue light from the same source, while a given amount of yellow energy from a sodium vapor lamp produces more than twice as much growth as the same amount of bluish energy from a mercury arc lamp.

Pure blue light appears to retard plant growth, while ultraviolet light is definitely injurious. On the sides of high mountains, plants which in the valleys below grow luxuriantly are often found flourishing but stunted, an effect attributed to the smaller cell structure promoted by the high intensity of blue and ultraviolet light at

high altitudes. The edelweiss of the Swiss Alps is a small plant, but when brought down into the valleys it grows tall and bushy. When taken indoors and illuminated with blue and ultraviolet light, it grows dwarfed and spindly as on the mountain peaks.

A collector of tropical plants is said to have been presented, during a visit to Central America, with a small shrub known as the dwarf Panamanian milkweed, which was widespread in that region. On his return to the United States he gave it to a botanical garden and thought nothing more of it. A year later, when he visited the garden, its director told him that he would like to have his help in identifying a great vine several hundred feet long, which was climbing along a fence and threatening to encircle the entire institution. The collector could make nothing of it, and finally stated his belief that the vine belonged to an entirely new species. 'That,' said the garden manager, 'is your dwarf Panamanian milkweed.' So great is the influence of physical environment on plant growth.

Most florists and hothouse vegetable growers who pride themselves on up-to-the-minute greenhouses are supporting inefficient, expensive, and archaic structures. A greenhouse is supposed to be an illuminated energy trap. Light of most of the wave lengths received from the sun penetrates glass, and once inside the greenhouse it is absorbed by plants and soil. As the temperature within the structure rises above that of the outside air, its inner contents begin to radiate heat, but the heat waves radiated from objects so cool cannot penetrate glass. Since the entrapped radiation cannot escape, it must devote its energies to building up the internal temperature of the greenhouse.

On such valid principles of physics was the greenhouse designed, but all too seldom are these principles followed correctly. There is little point in hav-

ing glass on the north side of a greenhouse, for the north half of the sky gives only one ninth as much radiant energy as the south half when the sun is shining, and more heat is conducted out through the glass than comes in. Scientists of the Boyce Thompson Institute have designed a new type of greenhouse which turns out to be cheaper to construct and to operate than the ordinary type, and far more efficient. This greenhouse contains little glass, but what glass there is is so disposed as to catch every possible ray of the sun, and to cut down losses by reflection. One half the roof, both ends, and the back wall of the greenhouse are all of sheet metal stuffed with sawdust for heat insulation. No crack is allowed in the walls, for out of this would escape the heat which is to come not only from the sun, when sunlight is available, but from electrical sources as well. The usual greenhouse designer has a custom of lapping the panes of glass like shingles, probably acting from a feeling that plants must have fresh air, but this process leaves tiny spaces through which heat pours from the inside of the house.

The Boyce Thompson scientists use electric light to lengthen the growing day of the plants when this is desirable, and so add as much as four hours of extra growth each day. When the temperature falls below the desired value the high-power lamps are automatically turned on and the heat from these keeps the hothouse warm. Even with expensive domestic power, the cost of the four hours' extra light and the entire heating was only thirty-six cents per day for a large greenhouse. In this way June is brought to the plants in January, and flowers, vegetables, and fruits can be raised profitably out of season when they command relatively high prices.

With such extensive precautions against external weather variations it

is necessary to provide artificially what before was always present as a gift from nature — gas for the plants to breathe! In one corner of the Boyce Thompson greenhouse a block of solid carbon dioxide (dry ice) was buried in sawdust, to evaporate slowly and furnish the gas which to the plants means fresh air. A tiny fire of any sort, to burn the excess oxygen given off by the plants while forming the carbon dioxide they need, would do as well and would give additional heat, but would require more attention. Scientists of the Smithsonian Institution have recently developed a method by which changes in the carbon dioxide content of the air as small as one part in a million can be measured by using infrared rays and the spectroscope.

Though a large greenhouse can be kept at summer temperatures fairly economically with steam heat, electric heating is more satisfactory, as it can be applied rapidly where it will do the most good, can be thermostated readily to keep any desired constant temperature, and can be used in the form of light so as to increase growth. To heat the present-day greenhouse electrically is expensive, but with proper design to conserve heat, and with the cost of power cut down, it should be profitable to control in this way the weather over acres of gardens near the centres of population. A tomato plant twenty-five feet high and forty feet wide, unaware that February has come to New England outside, is a profitable investment, especially if it bears twenty times the normal yield and the fruit matures in half the normal time.

III

The principal part of any farm is usually considered to be the soil. That soil is not essential is shown by the experiments which have been undertaken by a number of scientists who

have sprouted seeds on blankets of moist excelsior or sawdust dipping into trays of chemical-laden water. Twenty-fold increases in yield of various crops from strawberries to hay are reported, and it seems reasonable to expect that much of the vegetable and fruit gardening of the future will be carried out in this way. Under these conditions an acre of land becomes merely a space on the earth's surface which can be occupied, and the stoniest Vermont hillside, if it be near a large city, may become more valuable than a rich but isolated California valley. When soil is depleted and the farmer starts replenishing it with expensive chemicals, he begins to realize that the main contribution of soil is mechanical; it holds the plant upright in a given spot, keeps it from being blown or washed away, and allows water to seep slowly in thin films to its rootlets. However, the chemicals provided by nature, as well as the sunshine, air, and water, are too valuable to neglect entirely, and field crops in the open will always remain of importance.

At the University of Saskatchewan a single grass plant has been found to grow roots at the rate of more than two miles a day. A two-year-old plant was found to have a total root length of over three hundred miles, though no single rootlet was over seven feet long. The soil must be a sponge through which these roots can penetrate, and should bathe them in the nutrient solutions carried by the soil water.

Ploughing is a problem in mechanics, but ploughs have been designed since the beginning of time by trial and error rather than scientifically. Even the modern tractor drawing a gang of ploughs behind it leaves much to be desired as far as efficiency is concerned. Electric ploughs with motors of 125 horsepower, drawing energy from their own transformers which are fed from 30,000-volt transmission lines,

are common in France. In other areas seven ploughs fastened together plough a strip eight feet wide to a depth of eighteen inches, and are able to cover thirty acres in a day when pulled by 200-horsepower motors. The day of the streamlined plough is coming!

The physics of the soil has been the subject of many books, but much is still unknown about it. Farmers know that some crops prefer a loose sandy soil, and others a heavy clay soil, but if they have a field which changes in composition from one part to another, and horse beans happen to be the crop of the neighborhood, horse beans are likely to be planted in the whole field. The methods of the present make any other course impracticable; with the methods of the future, ten times as many horse beans will be grown on the most suitable tenth of the land, and the rest will be devoted to other crops or lie fallow.

The chemistry of soils has many dark corners still to be illuminated. Concentrations of certain elements so small as to be difficult to detect by ordinary analysis appear to be absolutely essential to plant growth. The spectroscope is being increasingly used to detect the extremely small amounts of important elements present in soils. In some regions of the West, vegetation in certain areas is spindly and apparently slowly poisonous to animals which graze on it. Investigation has shown that this land has a deficiency of sulphur and an excess of selenium. Selenium atoms are chemically much like sulphur atoms, and although a plant can tell the difference, it will absorb selenium, which appears almost as good, if it cannot get the sulphur it wants. But the selenium is very harmful to animals. With the usual methods long and tedious analyses are required to measure the sulphur and selenium contents of soils. But since the sulphur and selenium atoms give out very dif-

ferent spectrum lines, the spectroscope can be used quite readily to differentiate these substances.

Each pound of vegetable matter produced by a plant requires the transpiration on the average of forty gallons of water. The yield of some crops is at certain periods extremely sensitive to water application. A variation of two inches in the July rainfall in Ohio is said to cause a variation of \$13,000,000 in the value of the corn crop in that state alone.

A century from now a farmer who relies on rain to provide the water for his crops will probably be considered as old-fashioned as we consider the primitive man who harvested his crops wherever he found them in the wild. Rain is so likely to fall when it is not wanted, and not to fall when it is wanted. But floods and drouths are disagreeable only when kept apart; mix a good fat flood with a long shriveling drouth in the proper proportions, and excellent farming conditions result. Storage facilities are all that are required to do this. One of the things man is slowly learning in his gradual climb toward wisdom is that nature need not be accepted as she is at the moment, but can be smoothed out over a period of time and over an area of space, to make the ups and downs of life less severe.

The weather is a field of human interest for which physics must take full responsibility. Whether it rains or shines or snows depends on the physics of the atmosphere, and the meteorologists who dedicate themselves to following and predicting the vagaries of this most fertile topic of discussion are applied physicists of a most determined and interesting sort. Weather predicting a day in advance is gradually getting to be on a fairly sound basis, with more emphasis on the 'fairly' than one would like. Predictions made a week in advance are on a more shaky foundation.

Predictions made a year in advance, covering long-term periods of drouth and dampness, are still rather in the hopeful stage, though great possibilities seem to be appearing as more data are recorded. The weather is very complicated.

One new development which shows great promise is the polar-front theory, lately incorporated by the United States Weather Bureau into its official methods of prognostication. This theory, which originated with one of a famous family of weather physicists, Professor J. Bjerknes of Norway, is proving a powerful new tool in weather predicting. Norwegians seem to excel in the study of weather, perhaps because they live where so much of it originates. Much intensive research is going on in the science of meteorology, and it is quite reasonable to expect that before many more years have elapsed far more precise and accurate short-range forecasting will be possible.

In the midst of a host of pseudo-scientific methods of long-range forecasting, which inevitably arise in connection with so important a subject as the weather, there are a few legitimate methods which are being developed as a result of real research. Dr. Charles G. Abbot of the Smithsonian Institution has for years been measuring the amount of heat received by the earth from the sun. Three Smithsonian stations in three of the most desert regions of the earth are recording the sun's radiation daily. In almost treeless and waterless wastes, high up on mountain peaks, conscientious observers in Chile, in South Africa, and in western America have been taking records for many years. Although the heat received from the sun varies by only about one per cent, Abbot finds correlations between changes in solar radiation and temperatures at widely separated stations over the earth. By going back through his records, and by studying

the records of earthly weather as recorded in the growth rings of trees which have been followed into the past for over two thousand years, together with other phenomena, Abbot has found what appear to be recurrent cycles in the weather which, if real, should be of great value in predicting long-range trends in the succession of years fat and lean. Such long-range predictions may in the end turn out to be easier to make than detailed predictions for two weeks in advance, and certainly they will be far more important.

As to producing rain from the sky artificially, Dr. W. J. Humphreys put the matter succinctly when he said that there are two kinds of rain-making schemes — those that won't work and those that are too expensive to use. Nor are the requirements something that time will cheapen, either; the atmosphere is just too big for human control.

The greatest need for improving our knowledge of weather is improved means for collecting data. Airplane observations on physical conditions in the upper air are being carried out daily from a number of stations, but they are expensive and do not extend high enough. A newly developed method is the small free balloon, carrying a short-wave radio set with which it sends to earth a constant record of temperature, pressure, wind velocity, humidity, and other air data as it ascends mile after mile. Often the balloon and all its instruments are lost, but modern methods are cutting down the cost of such apparatus, and the information it sends back before plunging to loss or destruction makes the venture worth while.

Accurate prediction of frosts twenty-four hours in advance, a particularly ticklish job, is worth millions of dollars to California citrus growers. Smudge pots have been in use for orchard protection for many years. They act both

by heating the atmosphere (most inefficiently) and by creating a pall of smoke which cuts down loss of heat by radiation from the earth to a clear sky. On the other hand, how amused the early settlers would be to see modern newspaper photographs of a Georgia peach grower burying cakes of ice under his trees in an endeavor to forestall early blooming in a warm winter.

IV

According to the estimates of government entomologists, insects each year cause a loss of nearly two billion dollars in the United States, a sum equivalent to the earnings of over a million men. Light, sound, and electricity are all being used to supplement chemical dusts and sprays in fighting insects on a physical basis. A high-power incandescent lamp suspended a few inches above a tray filled with kerosene-covered water in the centre of a sixty-acre field resulted in the capture of about twenty gallons of insects in the first four nights of operation, after which the number of insects caught gradually decreased as the supply gave out. The rancher who used the method claimed that the light protected his beans, corn, and tomatoes, and entirely eliminated the need of sprays and poisons. Corn protected in this way was found free from worms. Ten cents per acre per night spent for electric light decreased the number of insect-damaged tomatoes from nearly half the crop to practically none; in another instance \$300 worth of electricity produced light which increased the value of the tomato crop by \$2000. A difficulty with this system for general application is that some injurious insects are not attracted by light, while others which are beneficial and necessary may be so attracted. It may be possible in the future to raise such worthy creatures artificially in a form which is not at-

tracted by light, and 'Smith's Non-Phototropic Ladybugs' may be a subject of future advertisements.

Insects can be killed by high-speed electrons shot from an evacuated high-voltage tube of a type designed by Lenard many years ago for experimental purposes of a different nature. This has been termed a death ray, but such methods would be expensive and limited in application. A more effective death ray has been found to be the simple sound wave given out by a large electrical transformer near Boston. The hum of this giant carried far through the night, and was apparently mistaken by male mosquitoes for the mating call of a particularly alluring female. Whatever the cause, large numbers of male mosquitoes appeared, only to be electrocuted and cast dead at the base of their electromagnetic Lorelei.

An electric fan sucking air into a bag placed under an electric lamp has been used to gather in a single night ten pounds of gnats, running about a million to the pound. A little bit of this sort of thing would go a long way in gnat circles.

The physicist is able to aid the plant physiologist and the geneticist in rapid development of new species. Mutations, those startling dissimilarities of offspring to parent, can apparently be greatly increased in number by bombarding seeds with X-rays or high-speed electrons. It is thought that the electrons set free inside the seeds by the colliding rays bombard the genes which control the characteristics of the plant-to-be. With mutations greatly increased in number, artificial selection can rapidly be applied to breed new types of useful crops.

Bulb growers on Long Island have already adopted new varieties of double gladioli and double narcissi which have been produced by exposing bulbs to X-rays. A scientist of the General

Electric Company has suggested that orange trees which would resist the cold might be developed in this way. Many freak varieties of plant have been produced — most of them valueless from an economic standpoint, to be sure, but all of importance in studying the processes of plant reproduction and variation. Many plants springing from seeds which have been subjected to the rays are found to be stunted, while in some the life processes have been greatly speeded up. Grapefruit trees two inches high, for example, have burst into blossom at the tender age of five weeks. General Electric scientists have produced by the X-raying of bulbs, among other less desirable new varieties of lilies, a type of regal lily with non-shedding anthers, a quality much desired by florists. Such tentative results promise much for the future, but since for every Burbank there are a million farmers content to grow hay in the same rocky pasture that their fathers hayed before them, it is reasonable to expect that the agricultural revolutionist with the necessary Burbank-Edison combination of qualities may be slow in appearing.

V

Crop preservation developments that are now under way show vast possibilities. Chemical means of preservation such as smoking, salting, pickling, and preserving in syrups have long been used. Well-tested physical methods are: heating to kill bacteria and moulds, followed by canning and bottling; drying and desiccation; coating with wax or grease to exclude air; and refrigeration. These methods, while preserving material in edible form, have usually caused some alteration in the product. No cold-storage egg can ever be mistaken for a fresh egg. However, modern research is resulting in increasingly successful new methods of preservation by refrigera-

tion, and products have been preserved for years with little detectable alteration from the fresh condition.

One of the most promising refrigerating processes is that developed by Clarence Birdseye of Gloucester, Massachusetts, since 1925. Birdseye noticed that, in the far North, fish and game which were kept frozen over long periods of time tasted quite fresh when thawed out. From this observation and previous work done by scientists he developed a process of quick freezing of fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, and fish, on which over one hundred patents have been granted. The basic idea of the Birdseye process is to freeze the fresh material quickly, so that large ice crystals which might rupture the cell walls do not form. Very low temperatures are used; rectangular packaged bricks of the cleaned food material held between two metal plates are rapidly chilled under moderate pressure to thirty degrees below zero. Another quick-freezing method is the 'Z' process, in which a finely atomized liquid refrigerant is used to remove the heat rapidly from the material being frozen. While some food materials do not respond well to such treatment, others after even as much as a year in storage have a flavor and appearance, as well as a vitamin content, which make them difficult to tell from the fresh article. More than fifty food products, from oysters and lobster meat to corn on the cob, when thawed after quick freezing have shown themselves deliciously edible.

While foods kept fresh by processes of this type can be obtained in most large cities, the cost of refrigerated display counters has been an economic factor preventing more rapid spread of the use of such foods. Research has already reduced the cost of such refrigerators by three fourths during the few years the method has been in existence, and the power required to operate them by

four fifths. Quick-freezing methods should be carefully distinguished from old-fashioned 'cold storage,' and even from the freezing of meats and milk which has been customary on shipboard for years. The essential improvement is the rapidity of the abstraction of heat from the food being frozen, to avoid change of flavor, and the use of refrigerants much colder than ice. Cold storage was designed to prevent spoilage — the new methods are meant to preserve the quality of freshness indefinitely. Far from being less fresh than the so-called fresh fruits and vegetables purchased in city stores, the quick-frozen products are often fresher, having been cleaned and processed within a few minutes of harvesting.

An era in development of low temperature food preservation similar to that which radio went through in the years 1900 to 1925 seems imminent. To-day more than ten million dollars' worth of quickly frozen food is being sold each year; as methods are improved, the cost of processing and storing the materials will decrease, and the economic importance of this industry should increase a hundredfold.

We may expect to see, before long, large mobile freezing plants waiting in field and orchard to freeze such crops as the cherry and strawberry at their ripest. During the remainder of the year the frozen bricks of fruit may be dealt out as needed, to stand in the cupboard until the flinty cold within them thaws, whereupon they gently collapse in the dish into a pile of ripe freshness.

Dehydration has long been used to preserve fruits like the prune and the apricot, and grass cured to form hay is as old as agriculture. It may seem strange that farmers can be taught anything new about hay farming after ten thousand years, but new methods of artificial curing now being undertaken show remarkable possibilities.

Hay is not merely dried grass; it is cured grass — by which is meant that certain changes produced by physical conditions of heat, humidity, pressure, and air flow other than mere loss of water occur in the plant material. Almost two thirds of the total grass weight must be evaporated as water vapor. Haying has always depended on the weather, but the age-old ready-made methods of cutting grass and leaving it to cure in the field are gradually retreating before the application of more controllable physical processes. Three British experimenters have found that they could greatly expedite and cheapen haymaking, and get a superior product, by piling the wet and new-cut grass around a wooden duct, in such a way that hot air could be blown through the pile. Using a five-horse-power motor they found it possible to cure a forty-ton rick of hay in thirty hours during typical English days of rain and fog. The hay commanded a premium in the market, as cattle were found to relish it better than ordinary hay.

Fan-made hay was found two thirds as expensive to prepare as sun-made hay. The chief saving came from less handling of the hay, and smaller loss from weather. By installing thermometers in various parts of a large rick, the temperature changes, which are influenced somewhat by fermentation and curing of the hay itself, could be followed, and the experimenters were able to produce green- or brown-colored hay at will.

The silo is a piece of physical apparatus which produces, by the chemical reactions produced by fermentation, a highly nutritious animal food which will last all winter. Now comes the electric silo, with a current of electricity passed through the silage as the chopped green material is fed in by air blowers or belt conveyers. Up to thirty amperes of current are passed through

the material, heating it and hastening fermentation. A silo described by R. B. Matthews holds 3000 cubic feet of food and requires not over 480 kilowatt hours for processing. The silage produced is of an improved character, for the lactic acid bacteria which transform the fodder into silage, much as cabbage is transformed into sauerkraut, are given an advantage over the heat-dreading deleterious bacteria which impede the preservation process.

VI

The farmer of to-day is not apt to be interested so much in how to produce more and better crops as in how to dispose of the crops he has. Hence a most important consideration is new crop outlets. Many products previously wasted are made use of by the needs of new developments of physics. Acoustic treatment of rooms requires sound-absorbing materials which are now manufactured from such fibres as sugar cane from which the sugar has been extracted. Drain pipes made from previously useless plant products are being fashioned with newly developed machinery. Cotton textiles are being used in road building — the tar covering protects the cotton, and the cotton acts as a binder. For air conditioning we must have filters, ducts, insulating materials, and structural materials, many of which can be made economically from agricultural products. The spinning of rayon made from cotton is a physical process. The microscope and the polariscope are being used to test and grade textile fibres so that they can be used in extended markets.

Two of the greatest inventions still to be made are an efficient direct means of converting solar energy into some easily available form such as electrical energy, and some practicable and economical means of storing this energy. Plants have learned how to accomplish energy

storage with an efficiency of about 1.2 per cent; this efficiency, though low, is better than that of the thermopiles and photocells which have been developed by science.

If methods can be developed for concentrating plant energy cheaply, so that it can be transported readily and used as a fuel which will compete with coal and oil, agriculture will take a great leap as an industry. Since earth-stored fuels must inevitably become less plentiful as time goes on, and since the efficiency of processing of agricultural energy-containing products will inevitably improve, any process deserves careful consideration which will give a product whose cost is of the same order of magnitude as that of natural fuels, even though more expensive at present. Many chemists and engineers now consider not only practical but economically feasible a process which changes the starch from potatoes, corn, and other crops into sugar, and ferments this sugar into alcohol, which can then be refined to give a motor fuel. On a straight cost basis, petroleum motor fuels still have the advantage by a factor of three or four, but the alcohol products possess certain advantages which make their developers very hopeful.

Nearly seventeen billion gallons of gasoline were consumed in the United States in 1936. Experts of the Chemical Foundation have computed that to replace this with alcohol containing equivalent energy would require the processing of nearly seven billion bushels of corn. Since the nation's entire output of corn in 1935 was only two billion bushels, if farmers want to continue to grow corn, and scientists can do their part in development work, a continuing and growing market should be available.

A cheap method of converting cellulose as well as starch directly into a

concentrated fuel would assuredly put the farm in the lead as an energy producer. Then the entire cornstalk (or whatever plant is found to store sunlight most efficiently and rapidly), dissolved in great vats to give a liquid of high fuel value, would go forth to run the generating stations and the motor cars and locomotives of the nation, and the importance of the farmer to society would be even greater than it now is.

A great contribution of physics to the farmer may well be in the future, as it has been in the past, psychological. Surely the telephone, the telegraph, the radio, the moving picture, and the automobile have done much to make rural life more satisfying. But more important than all of these is the difference between the outlook of a man who has a stony field plagued with bugs which contains a few bedraggled spears of corn or cotton, a mortgage, and an overworked wife and family, and that of a self-respecting citizen whose land, even if only an acre, is able to produce an insured and profitable income. One of the things most likely to bring about this change of outlook is the application to farm problems of the methods of scientific research which have resulted so successfully in other fields.

As an editorial writer has observed, there are not many good wars in which a person may enlist, but the struggle against wild nature is about the best cause to which one may dedicate his life. The methods of science go to the root of farm problems; the methods of politics and economics, while necessary for temporary adjustments, can never do more than rearrange the surface aspect of things. One single basic scientific discovery can make all of the economic solutions to the plight of the farmer unnecessary. The man with the hoe should be nonexistent a hundred years from now.

MEN RUNNING

BY JAMES GOULD COZZENS

I

INSISTENTLY, prodding him awake, George Holcombe heard, unreal, then harsh, more urgent, 'Captain! Say, Captain!'

He made himself stir. Straws poked his cheek and, recoiling, he lifted his head from the saddlebags. 'What the devil!' he grunted. At once he was wholly aware; tense, remembering where he was.

To all appearances it was night still. A play of firelight entered the open doors of the barn, showed him dimly the thick crossbeams high above. Sitting up on the straw in the wagon, he groped for his boots in the dark. 'What is it?' he asked quickly. 'Are we going to be attacked?' He climbed stiffly over the side, landing on his sore stocking feet.

'The Colonel ain't back,' observed his awakener. It was Carl Hurd, bulking big and aimless against the firelight. 'So I —'

'Well, what are you doing here? How dare you leave your post? Don't you know yet what picket duty means?'

'Sure I do, George; but there's a cavalry fellow or something here looking for the Colonel. You better talk to him. I stopped him all right and he did n't have any countersign; but I figured how could anybody have it except us? He said he's from General Runyon with orders, so I —'

'Tell him I'm coming.' George Holcombe found his boots, forced his feet

into them. He came out into the firelight past the short picket line of the officers' horses. Several groups of men by the fires were still playing cards — making a night of it, apparently. They ought to be getting some rest, but probably they found they could n't sleep on the ground. The ones who could were rolled in blankets here and there off in the shadows beyond the irregular stacks of muskets. A few of them, not wrapped in anything and doubtless wet with dew, might be drunk as well as asleep.

A uniformed man was sitting his horse, looking from right to left slowly. It was possible to recognize from no more than the silhouette of his carriage that he must be from the regular army. What he thought of this encampment would n't be hard to guess. He watched George Holcombe approach a minute and said, 'What troops are these?' Plainly it cost him an effort to call them troops at all. George Holcombe could see the insignia and shoulder bars of a first lieutenant, U. S. A.

'Second New Jersey Volunteers; first and sixth companies, First Battalion. I'm Captain Holcombe.'

The rider saluted him with a kind of negligent precision. Obviously he did not consider George Holcombe's years and general appearance adequate for a captain. 'These orders are directed to Lieutenant Colonel Tucker. He's not here?'

'He heard there was to be a conference somewhere up the line. He went up. He said he'd be back, but he may have lost his way.'

'He'll be lucky if the Secesh cavalry don't find it for him,' the Lieutenant said. Warily he allowed himself to relax a little in the saddle. 'You have n't a major?'

'He was left sick at Roach's Mills. I think I'm in command. I'm first company captain. We lost track of the Second Battalion. Maybe Colonel Tucker's with them.'

The Lieutenant unbent more. He swung painfully out of the saddle. 'Well, Captain,' he said, 'you have n't a drink on you, have you?'

'I have a pint of brandy, sir.'

'It would be a favor if you'd give me a drink. I'm about in. Have you any kind of map? Do you know where you are now?'

'No, sir. Not very well. Colonel Tucker had a map, but he took it with him.'

The Lieutenant groaned slightly. George Holcombe had unbuttoned the flap of his deep blouse pocket and produced the glass flask. The Lieutenant tilted it up, took a remarkable swallow, and handed it back. 'Well, I have a map,' he said, wiping his mouth. 'Find a bit of paper if you can and try to copy some of it.' He produced and spread out a frail, soiled sheet. 'The Warrenton Turnpike runs directly west from Fairfax to Centerville to Gainesville Station, up there. The first three divisions started moving just after midnight. The engineers found them an unfortified ford over the Bull Run several miles north of the turnpike bridge. As we understand it, there's to be a feint at the bridge to cover a flanking movement by the ford which is expected to take in reverse the whole enemy line along the Run. Colonel Miles's Fifth Division is at Centerville. General Runyon would

like to get the Fourth Division up to where it would be available to reënforce Miles. Better have your men get breakfast, and as soon as it's perfectly light march them east on any paths or roads you can find — you're bound to come on the Fairfax Court House road. You're about three miles south of Vienna Station.' He shivered a little and yawned. 'Listen,' he said. 'Hear the locomotive whistle?'

'Yes, sir.'

There had been a general stir around the fires and more fuel had been thrown on the nearest one. In the brighter light the Lieutenant's puffed eyes and drawn cheeks were gilded. The young sandy moustache drooped its ends. Removing his hat a moment, he showed the wisps of his light hair matted damply with sweat. He looked about him, shivered again, and said, 'You may as well keep the map. It's dawn already. I'll have to report back. Get toward Fairfax the best way you can. One thing: the Rebels are probably as bad off as we are.'

George Holcombe was moved to say, 'We don't look a great deal, sir; we bivouacked here after dark and we are n't used to it, but these boys are all right. We have n't done any marching, much; but if they can find any Rebels, they'll fight all you want.'

The lieutenant laid a hand on his saddle. 'Captain,' he said, 'I hope they will. I know they'll try to. But you can't win a battle without an army. The Rebels could lose it, but we can't possibly win it. You don't know where your Colonel is. You don't know where your other battalion is — you should n't be formed in battalions, anyway; there's no sense in it. You have no brigade headquarters because nobody has seen fit to brigade the division. Where are your trains?'

'Captain Kingsinger of the sixth company went back for them, sir. He knew where they were to be.'

'He won't find them there. They broke some wheels; they missed the road; they were held up by artillery. Now you're short another officer. What became of the Adjutant?'

'He went with Colonel Tucker, sir.'

'The roster went with him, probably. How are you going to have roll call?'

'Well, sir,' — George Holcombe found himself flushing, — 'I think the first sergeants keep rolls for their companies.'

'Good for you! Have your men anything for breakfast?'

'Most of them probably have a little something in their haversacks, sir.'

'If I were you I'd see that it was shared where necessary — so everyone gets some. It's going to be a hard, hot day.' George Holcombe saw that it was, in fact, day. In the east, early summer light had paled all the stars. It was Sunday, July 21, 1861.

II

With Hurd's help, George Holcombe found Lieutenants Joe Matthews and Harry Vanzant burrowed in a haystack. The regimental color sergeant and three corporals of his guard were also in the haystack at a point marked by the furled colors leaning casually against the side. Nathan Wright, the first company bugler, and his nephew Pete, who was drummer, put in their appearance. The boy had shed the drum jacket, and yawning, flexing his wrists, began to coax out subdued, fragmentary periods of the long roll.

George Holcombe said, 'We might as well have Wright sound assembly. We're ordered to report at Fairfax. A battle is going to be fought beyond Centerville. We're simply joining the reserve, though. I'm afraid we won't get anywhere near it.'

Harry Vanzant said, 'Maybe we will, if we get started. We're going to look pretty silly if we come home with-

out ever even seeing a battle. Where's the Colonel?'

'He may be with the other battalion. We ought to see if we can find where it is before we start. They won't have had any orders, maybe.'

'I move we let them find us. If we don't start, they'll run the Rebels all the way to Richmond without giving us a shot at them.'

'Well, we'll get lined up, anyway, and have roll call. Sound off, will you, Nathan? We can form across the field there.'

Wright spat, licked his lips, and brought the bugle up. 'Let 'er go, Sonny!' he said to Pete.

George Holcombe buttoned his blouse and straightened his sword belt. The eastern sky was a fine, gleaming, lucent white above the shadowed treetops. Dew was visibly gray on the short rough tufts of pasture grass stretched away to the second-growth oak woods. The bugle, clear and fresh as the early air, went ringing over the barnyard, down the lane and orchard, the drum after it, roll on roll.

Probably hardly anyone was asleep, for at once in the dusk of dawn under the trees, around the wide ruddy splotches of the fading fires, there was a swarming movement; the musket stacks were plucked apart; sergeants came running. Now, from somewhere, Lieutenants Hart and Moore of the sixth company came up. George Holcombe said quietly, 'Maybe they're going to raise a row. They'll want to wait for Kingsinger, probably.'

Hart said, 'What's up, Holcombe? Colonel get back?'

'No; but orders came from General Runyon to move at daylight. We'll have to go.'

'We can't go. How about the Colonel and Kingsinger? How'll they know where to find us?'

'We'll have to chance it. We'll have to obey General Runyon's orders.'

'I don't think so. We have n't anyone in command. We'd better wait.'

'I'm in command. I'm the ranking captain.'

'Who said so?'

'I'm captain of the first company. That makes me senior captain.'

'What do you mean? Any company could have happened to be first. What's senior about that?'

'Well, that's the way it is in the army. Tell your men to fall in.'

'Not until the Colonel comes, Holcombe. I'm not taking orders from you.'

'D'you want a bang on the snout?' asked Harry Vanzant. 'Because that's something you'll take, all right.'

'Not from you.'

'Oh, so you think not!'

'Stop it, Harry!' George Holcombe snatched his arm. 'We won't get anywhere that way. Listen to a little common sense, Hart. There's going to be a battle somewhere around Centerville. General Runyon is trying to get his division together, in case it's needed.' He had one eye apprehensively on the lines forming in the brightening light across the pasture. 'Do you want it to be said the Second New Jersey Volunteers lay around camp all morning because they were afraid to fight?'

'Who'll say it?'

'Well, the militia regiments certainly will.'

'Who cares what the militia says?' asked Hart. 'Their ninety days are about up, and all they want to do is get home. The volunteers could lick them any day.'

'No,' Lieutenant Moore said. 'Come on, Jake. He's right, there. If there's going to be any fighting, we want to help.'

'All right.' Hart nodded, sulky. 'But look here, don't think you're commanding the sixth company. Until Captain Kingsinger comes back, Moore and I are commanding it.'

'You mean,' said Harry Vanzant, 'until a gun goes off. After that you'll be so far away —'

'See here, Vanzant —'

'Shut up, you fools,' Moore said. 'Let's get to our places. We're just wasting time.'

George Holcombe wiped his forehead.

'Battalion, attention!' he shouted. 'Sergeants, to the front — march! Call the rolls.'

III

Rations were ordinarily prepared by the company cooks, to whom the orderly sergeants issued them. Preparing their own food seemed more than many of the men could manage. There was a good deal of grumbling and quarreling around the badly built small fires while the morning grew brighter and the sun came up level across the orchard.

Hurd, who had been acting as George Holcombe's orderly, made some bad coffee which the officers drank, sitting in a circle, eating old bread and half-cooked bacon strips. Harry was still belligerent. Lieutenant Hart, who was no match for him and probably knew it, covered his sense of inferiority by being huffy and sarcastic. Joe Matthews wanted only to keep the peace and Moore was a quiet chap, not at all inclined to back up Hart. George Holcombe spread out the map for them and indicated as well as he could where they were going — supposing the men got themselves fed and they ever started. The sun was riding high, the freshness gone from the air before Wright was able to blow assembly. There was some delay in lining up. 'That spring's dry,' the first sergeant told George Holcombe. 'They've been hunting around, but there is n't any other water. I don't think more than four or five of them got their canteens filled.'

'We'll find some water,' George Hol-

combe promised. 'We've wasted hours now. Get them in line. Make sure they have all their equipment.'

'A lot of them say they won't carry it, George. It's quite a load for a hot day.'

'Well, they'll be sorry.' He noticed that several men in the first rank had removed their boots and stockings and stood barefoot. 'We may have to march fifteen or twenty miles,' he said, exasperated. 'Tell those fellows to put their shoes on!'

'They say it hurts them too much, Captain. They've got pretty good calluses.' It would be hopeless to try to correct these matters unless he wished to spend the morning arguing. 'They'll be sorry,' he repeated, futilely. He walked down the line and said to Lieutenant Moore, 'We'll march them in column of companies by the right flank —'

He broke off, turning his head. Moore turned, too. The ranks, fairly quiet before, were instantly completely quiet. After a moment it came again, at a great distance, but distinct on the hot morning air: a deep dull sound like something heavy — the earth itself, perhaps — being moved in the southwest. 'That's cannon,' a surprised voice remarked.

'Battalion, attention!' George Holcombe called. 'By the right flank —'

Sergeants' voices went up in chorus. Harry Vanzant roared, 'Right face, you blockhead! Don't you know how to march by the flank?'

'Forward,' George Holcombe continued, giving them time enough to correct any initial errors. They had evolved themselves moderately well into ranks of four. 'Route step, march!' He swung a leg over his horse. Lieutenant Hart's sharp voice reached him above the tramping: 'Arms at will, simpleton, but keep your muzzle up! Do you want to shoot Luke's head off?' A gruffer voice guffawed, 'Luke'd never

miss it.' Riding to the front, George Holcombe half turned in his saddle, looking back at the column, now altogether into the shadowed woods closing down on the lane. This view of them was more encouraging. Their uniforms, seen not too closely, looked well, clean and new.

Gazing at the faces, — some bearded, some brown, some reddened under the variously tipped and tilted forage caps, — he could name most of those in the first company, remember things about them, where they lived, who their people were. They were a good sort, in the main — farm boys used to a hard day's work. There was no reason to suppose that, to a Monmouth County man, the sixth company would n't seem as good. The three companies which had been detached Friday were largely from Ewing and Trenton — store clerks and mechanics. George Holcombe doubted if they would stand up to marching so well. Their arms were poorer, too — long, heavy, altered muskets instead of the fine new Minié rifles these men had been given. On the other hand, there was n't much ammunition available for the rifles. On an average, they probably did n't have twenty rounds.

The Vienna-Fairfax Court House road lay full in the sun. George Holcombe called out, 'Column right!' and saw the dried reddish dust puff up under his horse's hoofs. It rose at once in a haze about the first platoon. Looking back an instant later, he saw it lifting to the treetops. The sixth company was entirely invisible. Out of the obscurity he could hear the vague voices of sergeants crying, 'Close up! Close up, boys!'

In a few minutes, riding his horse through the roadside brush, Lieutenant Hart appeared. 'Listen, Holcombe,' he said, 'you can't breathe back there' — he was indeed coated with dust from boots to hat brim. 'I'll halt our company and let you get a

half a mile or so ahead. We can't miss the road, and if you run into anything, all you have to do is stop and we'd be up with you in a couple of minutes.'

Harry Vanzant was riding forward from the haze now, and, foreseeing a new altercation, George Holcombe nodded. 'All right. I think we ought to reach Fairfax in an hour, so don't halt to rest before that.'

'That's the last you'll see of him,' Harry said. 'Well, he's no loss. Hear the guns?'

'Yes.'

'It certainly must be the real thing. If it goes on at that rate, I'll bet you a half dollar it'll be over before we get anywhere near it.'

'We have n't orders to get anywhere near it. I'd just as soon we did n't get into an engagement — I mean until everyone has had more practice with the rifles. Half of them would probably take an hour to reload.'

'They might hurry a little more if they saw some Rebels. When you can hear them having a battle, I guess you don't need any orders about where to go.'

'Well, we may find the Colonel, or division headquarters at Fairfax.' He looked at Harry's dust-coated face. 'Ride here,' he said. 'I'll fall back awhile.'

In the deep dust, Joe Matthews's horse plodded patiently along. Joe had tied a handkerchief over his mouth and nose. He saluted George Holcombe. 'That Hart fellow ordered the sixth company to halt,' he observed, muffled by the handkerchief. 'He was getting his nice uniform all dirty. I could n't blame them much, but I think some of us ought to stay together. A fine battalion this is! First they detach three companies; then Hart thinks he's General Scott and holds another; and here we are with one company to the regimental colors. A couple of troops of Rebel cavalry scouting

around could take them right away from us.'

George Holcombe, coughing, looked at the sun, a firm-edged, fierce copper disk in the dust cloud above. 'Cheer up, Joe,' he said.

From the front came suddenly Harry Vanzant's voice: 'Company, halt!' The sergeants in position as file closers passed it back: 'Halt! — Halt! — Halt!' George Holcombe put his horse violently ahead, his heart jumping to a suspended beat. 'Harry!' he shouted. 'Harry, what is it?'

'Dust ahead there. I could hear horses.'

'Joe, come up! Company, attention! Ready, arms!'

'Maybe it's just a team,' Harry said, apologetic. 'But I thought we'd better see if we're running into anything.'

Joe Matthews said, 'I knew it. It's Rebel cavalry. They're all over the place. Wait and see. What do you think we'd better do, George?'

'Harry and I will ride forward. You take command. Get the company into platoon front and fix bayonets. If you hear any shooting, prepare to fire by volley. If it's cavalry, shoot low, at the horses; they'd only miss the men. And have somebody ready to send back to warn Hart.'

'Now?'

'No. Give someone your horse. At the first shot, let him ride for it. And, wait a minute — I have another idea. Get the men re-formed, and then move forward slowly, kicking up as much dust as you can. That way, anyone attacking might not be able to tell how many lines there were.'

'Well, it's nothing but a carriage,' Harry said. 'Look at that!'

Through the trees at the bend of the road appeared a pair of horses trotting laboriously. A Negro driver immediately pulled them up. 'We'd better see about it,' Harry said. 'It may be spies, or some big Secesh fellow trying to

get away.' George Holcombe rode forward.

From the carriage an enormously fat, red-faced man, with curved gray moustaches thick as sausages, squeaked vehemently, 'Who the devil are you?'

A younger, spryer fellow with checked trousers and a dust-powdered bowler hat laughed. 'It's all right, Senator,' he said. 'These are our boys. Good morning, Captain.'

'Good morning,' George Holcombe said, at a loss.

'I'm the correspondent from the New York *Globe*, Captain. The Senator and I are trying to get to Centerville. We seem to have missed the road. Perhaps you could direct us. The Senator thought you were Rebels.' He laughed. 'You're not, are you?'

'We're the Second New Jersey Volunteers. You could n't get to Centerville this way. But I would n't go if I were you. That firing you hear now is down there. There was expected to be a battle this morning.'

'As a matter of fact, Captain, we came out to see the battle, but I guess it's too late. It's about over. McDowell seems to have done it. The Rebels are reported in full retreat. We thought we could see the field, however.'

'You definitely know that?' The depth of his disappointment surprised George Holcombe. He had n't, he reminded himself, really expected that they would see any fighting to-day, but there had been a chance — if General Runyon were getting his division together it must be wanted for something. 'Are you sure it's really all over?' he asked. 'We can still hear firing.'

'I know how you feel, Captain. But it's as much credit to a man to have been ready to fight. There was word direct from the field at Fairfax. Burnside and Sherman had cleared the Warrenton Pike; the stone bridge was open. The artillery you hear is prob-

ably shelling Manassas Junction and the railroad stock. I should say that the rebellion — in Virginia, at least — is finished.'

'Have some champagne, New Jersey,' said the Senator. 'Whole hamper of it here. It's no man's drink, but it takes the dust out of your mouth.'

'I think we'd better get through to Fairfax, sir. I'd be glad of a drink then.'

'Right-about face, Sambo!' cried the Senator. 'Captain, you're welcome to all you can hold of it, whenever you want it. This is a great day for America.' Man's drink or none, it occurred to George Holcombe that the Senator was making the best of it. The newspaper fellow gave him a quick, friendly wink. With difficulty the Negro got the carriage around in the road.

IV

Over the white cupola of Fairfax Court House, over the massed treetops and few roofs of the village, dust hung too, an immense vague cloudy pillar visible on the hot blue sky. Not far behind the Senator's carriage, George Holcombe marched the first company up the rise past the old church. Oppressed still to reflect that it was all over, — they might even be back in Trenton in a week or so, and where they went or what they did was of no pressing importance, — he could at least hope that orders of some sort would be found here, for at Fairfax the army seemed to be in force. Before the church at least a score of smiths worked over traveling forges, reshoeing strings of horses to a great clangor of hammers on anvils, scorching stench of red iron laid to horn. The churchyard was full of teamsters and commissary orderlies reclining to rest or play cards among the graves. The roadside was lined solidly with canvas-hooded commissary wagons. Jamming the country streets

moved carts and carriages, troops of cavalry, groups of mounted officers, ambulances. Most of the Court House grounds were occupied by an artillery park of brass Napoleons. Horses crowded the hitching rails and blocked half the road before two taverns.

Reaching finally the short arched arcade of the red brick Court House, George Holcombe wiped his dust-thickened lips and croaked, 'Company, halt. At ease.' He dismounted, trying to slap the dust from his uniform and make himself a little more presentable.

'Stay in ranks!' shouted Harry Vanzant; but vainly, for the men had noticed the Court House well around the side.

'All right,' George Holcombe said. 'Let them fill their canteens. You can't stop them. Carl, hold my horse a minute, will you?'

Stepping into the arcade, he saluted a very tall man with colonel's eagles pinned to a brilliant red and pale blue uniform. 'Could you tell me where General Runyon's headquarters are, sir?'

'Runyon?' said the Colonel. 'Never heard of him. Miles's headquarters are in Centerville, but if you're looking for him, he's over the road there, drunk as an owl. What he's doing here, nobody knows. I hear McDowell's won. Did you just come down?'

'No, sir. We came from Vienna Station way.'

'Humph! Well, excuse me, I must get on.'

Two artillery officers, presumably attached to the parked battery, came out the doors and George Holcombe saluted again.

In answer to his question, one of them shook his head. The other said, 'Hold on! Runyon. Fourth Division. Why, he never left Roach's Mills, that I heard of. He was n't ordered forward. Who are you?'

'New Jersey, eh?' said the first officer. 'Well, maybe I can help you there. I don't know anything about General Runyon, but quite a number of your boys went through toward Centerville — about an hour ago, I'd think. A Colonel Montgomery commanding. He your colonel?'

'He commands the First New Jersey,' George Holcombe said, despondent.

'Well, is that in your division?'

'Yes, sir, I think so.'

'Then, young man, I'd say the best thing for you to do would be to report to him, if you can find him.'

George Holcombe stepped out with them from the shadow of the arches into the sun. The first company had surrounded the roofed, lattice-walled well under the trees. One of the artillery officers said, 'If those are your men, it won't do them any good. That well was drunk dry three hours ago.'

'Where could we get water, sir?'

'I wish I could tell you. If you move out the pike, you'll probably find a brook somewhere.' He considered George Holcombe a moment. 'I suppose you have nothing to eat, either.'

'I'm afraid we have n't, sir.'

'Well, I'll give you a tip. Those commissary wagons are full of cases of biscuit. It's better than nothing. Send one of your lieutenants down with a few men. There are no guards and no drivers. It's simply bedlam around here. Fortunate for us that McDowell whipped the Rebels so quickly. One more day like this and we'd be in full retreat.'

V

At one o'clock there had been no sign of Hart and the sixth company. George Holcombe could see that this might be his own fault. Fairfax grew more and more crowded. Hart might have found it impossible to get into the village at all.

In any event, they would have to

get some water, and there was no use waiting. George Holcombe lined the company up. As he had expected, the men who threw away their shoes could not possibly go on. Their feet were caked over with bloody dust. The rest had resulted in such swelling that they could scarcely stand on them. He wrote slips of permission to be out of ranks and signed them. They could wait for the sixth company.

To get out of town in column would be impossible. They broke ranks and worked their way through. Once out on the Centerville road, this meant a long delay in re-forming and they were hardly re-formed when they came on a small stream at the bottom of the slope. A flimsy wooden bridge over it had broken down, damming up a wide shallow pool. At least a hundred men were already there, bathing their feet and faces; despite the filthiness of the water, drinking it. The approach of the company was watched with open hostility and George Holcombe guessed that a column coming in reasonable military order made many of them afraid they were about to be rounded up and returned to their commands.

Ranks were broken again to let those who could stomach it drink. Harry Vanzant rode up beside him and said, 'What do you think all that firing's about, George? It has n't stopped any.'

The first sergeant made his way up from the throng on the muddy trampled bank, wiped the water from his beard, and, saluting, said, 'George, a lot of those fellows say they've come down from the field and that it's all a lie about there being any victory. They say the Rebels captured a couple of batteries and are drumming the daylight out of —'

'All right, all right,' George Holcombe said, agitated. 'Don't believe everything you hear. Let's get formed up. We may find some better water farther along.'

At the fork a faded sign, pointing left, read 'CENTERVILLE 5'; but there would have been no doubt about it anyway. A constant slow stream of passers-by straggled down. A few appeared to be wounded. Many of them, seeing at a distance the dust-hazed shape of the tramping column, got quickly off the road altogether. Occasionally wagons or carriages came up, pulled over a little, and waited while they passed.

His sharp pointed face sombre, Joe Matthews rode alongside after a while. 'George,' he said, 'nobody seems to be going our way but us. Do you think maybe we'd better —'

'Centerville can't be more than two or three more miles. I think we'd better go on to there.'

'The boys are pretty well fagged out.'

'We'll give them ten minutes' rest. That looks like a little brook, there. Maybe they can fill their canteens.'

For several hours now heavy white-crested thunderclouds had been gathering on the horizon. They massed up, quietly ominous, well over the roadside skirts of pine and the dense low groves of black jack and pin oak. Looking down from them, George Holcombe was astonished to see the Senator with the heavy moustaches. He sat at the edge of the woods on a log, fanning himself with his huge straw hat, with the other hand gesturing toward the great clouds. 'On the just and on the unjust,' he observed. 'Mark my words, New Jersey.'

The Senator's carriage, minus a wheel, reposed helplessly in the ditch. There was no sign of horses, driver, or the newspaper correspondent. The Senator had turned his attention to the men released from ranks crowding the little brook. 'Every one,' he boomed, 'that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself — the Midianites are given into thy hand, New Jersey.'

Take some champagne. That newspaper fellow rode to Centerville on one horse. He ought to be back. Sambo rode to Fairfax to fetch another carriage. So here I am, so here I am! What's all this mob doing?' On the wicker wine hamper beside him lay a short four-barreled New Elliott revolver. 'Band of thieves, most of them,' he said. 'Hi, there!' he cried.

The horse, lathered, had coated with dust, lathered through that and coated again. Mud clung in flat cakes all over him. The newspaper fellow had lost his hat; his dark hair was as dirty as the horse. His checked pants and narrow pointed shoes were red with clay. He wiped the mud off his lips, swung down, and tied his horse to the young oak where George had fastened his. 'Where's your company, Captain?'

George Holcombe indicated them.

'You'd better get them back. It's all up — it's a rout. They're pouring into Centerville. They're —'

'You mean our men?'

'Naturally. Heaven knows what happened, but they're licked. It's nothing but a panic now. They're running so hard —'

'They could n't be! Run from a lot of miserable Rebels! Why —'

'Don't worry, you'll see it in a minute. These are just stragglers, but a mile or so back they're coming down like a river. They'll run all the way to Washington probably.'

'You mean the army's retreating?'

'What there is left of it. We'll wait for the first rush to go by. Then we'll get you on this horse, Senator — what are you going to do, Captain?'

'Try to rally them, you fool. Harry! Joe! Company, fall in. Sergeant, on the right there, to guide. By platoon front across the road. That's it. Get them up, Harry. Out of that water, you men!'

'Captain,' said the newspaper man, 'I may be a fool, but I'm not so much

of a fool as you are. There are probably ten thousand men and a thousand horses who are going to come down this road. They'll go right over you.'

'That's the only way they will get by.' Facing the partly formed lines, he said, 'No one is to pass by this road. If those approaching do not halt on order, I shall give the command: "Fire by files." The first rank will then fire a volley. It will at once face about, pass through the succeeding ranks to the rear, re-form, and reload. The second rank will then fire —'

'Good God, Captain!' The newspaper man seized his shoulder. 'You can't do that! It's nothing but murder. You might kill a few wretches, but that won't stop them. They can't stop — too many behind.'

'It will never be said that the Second New Jersey Volunteers ran away.'

'Men just as good are running now, Captain. Listen! There it comes. The ones who could get horses will be first. They won't even hear you if you try to tell them to halt.'

Over the low rise, down toward the brook, lifted a great cloud of dust, a tumult of hoofbeats. George Holcombe opened his mouth to say, 'Get off the road, if you're afraid,' but, seeing now the dust like an impending cyclone, he recognized suddenly, with a kind of amazement, that he was afraid himself. No one in his right senses stood in front of a herd of galloping horses.

There were sudden slight wavering breaks in the solid rank of the front line; bayonets shook here and there. 'Hey!' roared Harry Vanzant. 'Stand to the colors, you cursed cowards!' But his voice was without volume, without any warmth or conviction, for, like George Holcombe, he must have found, looking at what was coming, that he was a coward himself. He just stood lumpishly with his nerveless sword out, not certain whether he was more afraid of admitting that he was

afraid than of being trampled to death. He turned his fixed eyes and blank dusty face furtively toward George Holcombe. George Holcombe yelled faintly, 'Break ranks! Jump for it! Clear out!'

The newspaper fellow, putting his head down, charged straight at him. They both went over and over, bringing up in the ditch. From this angle, dazed, George Holcombe could see the swinging, bayoneted rifles, the flying boots of men leaping above him. There was a solitary shriek of someone ridden down. Groups of swaying, pounding horses loomed in the dust whirl; the ground shook under them. They were by. Immediately more succeeded them; and then more.

The newspaper fellow sat up slowly, a hand to the side of his head, where a slight shallow abrasion was beading the dust with blood. 'Well,' he panted, 'that was a near thing, if I do say it. They were right on top of us, Captain. Pretty soon you'll see the mob on foot. After a while, when they thin out a

little, if I were you I'd just take my colors and form up as many of the men as you can find and go back. The Rebels won't be coming. There's nothing you can do here.'

George Holcombe got painfully to his feet. 'You saved my life,' he said. 'I suppose I should be grateful.'

The Senator had not budged from his log. His big straw hat was tilted back on the great dome of his forehead, and to this expanse he applied a silk handkerchief. Through the dust haze he said gently, 'There, there, Sonny, don't take it too much to heart. We all did a little misjudging to-day.'

George Holcombe looked at him, stony-eyed. 'I take it to heart, sir, when my country's whipped. You came out here expecting a sort of picnic or something, but we—' He stopped.

'Have some champagne, Sonny,' said the Senator. 'It's the last in the hamper. Next time we start for Richmond we won't be bringing anything fancy, maybe.'

HUNTING FOR MANUSCRIPTS

BY LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

ENGLAND has become the home of sport for many Americans, who come annually to this island for deer stalking, for fishing, and for the hunting of foxes. But there is another form of hunting which has occupied a good deal of my English leisure — the hunting, namely, for manuscripts of literary interest in English archives and old English country houses. I acquired my taste for this form of sport when I began to write the life of the old poet and ambassador and Provost of Eton, Sir Henry Wotton; and I spent some years in collecting his unpublished letters. The archives of the Record Office, the British Museum, and the Bodleian Library are easily accessible to researchers, and there are officials at these institutions ready and even eager to assist students in their labors. But I soon became aware that distinguished biographers preferred to make use of printed sources rather than to pursue their researches among unpublished papers. I found that since Walton's biography at least seven sketches, portraits, and lives of Wotton had been written by scholars of distinction, including Adolphus Ward and Sir Sidney Lee, but that none of these had looked at his dispatches, of which at least five hundred were preserved unread in the Record Office, or at his letters to be found in the British Museum. All these were, of course, easily accessible; one had only to ask for the packet which might contain a document of interest, and the packet

would be brought to one's reading desk by a polite official.

When, however, I wished to pursue my researches into the archives of private houses, I found that a much more elaborate method of procedure was required. It is quite useless, in my experience, to write out of the blue, so to speak, to great personages and ask permission to examine their muniments rooms and inherited manuscripts. Either they will not reply or they will send curt refusals. I think that they do not know themselves (not being literate people) what treasures they possess; or if they do they regard an unknown inquirer as a thief or gangster, with robbery as the object of his visit. I found it necessary, therefore, to procure some kind of personal introduction before writing to them. The plan I adopted was that of inquiring among the people I happened to meet if any of them knew, or knew anything about, the magnate whose manuscripts I wanted to examine; and once a personal relation of this kind was formed, however tenuous, all difficulties would at once vanish.

The world allots but meagre rewards to researchers; it allows them in recompense, however, the privilege of describing the discoveries they have made, and thus to enjoy what is one of the least reprehensible forms of human vanity — a form of self-glory it has not very amiably denominated by the inglorious term of 'boasting.' Undeterred, how-

ever, by that epithet, I shall avail myself of the scholar's license — a license also shared by fishermen — by mentioning a few of my successes in this special sport of mine.

I

In examining the Seventh Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, I found a note by A. J. Horwood, who had been sent in 1878 to examine the manuscripts at a great mansion near Oakham, of a manuscript volume which contained 'copies of letters seemingly by and to Sir Henry Wotton.' I found that this house was in the possession of a certain elderly colonel, and I began inquiring among the people I met if any of them knew him. At last I met an old lady who was his cousin, and who kindly said that I might write to him and make use of her name as an introduction. I therefore wrote, and received a most courteous answer from the colonel, saying that he knew nothing of the manuscript book, and did not believe he possessed it, but that he was quite willing for me to come and look for it myself.

I thereupon went to Oakham, and took a cab up to an immense Italian villa, which is one of the biggest houses in England, if not the biggest. I drove into a great colonnaded courtyard of about twenty acres (larger, I believe, than the Great Court of Trinity College, Cambridge), and up to the splendid steps of the mansion — steps partially broken and partially overgrown with weeds, for the whole place looked ill-kept and considerably out of repair, as if funds were not abundant on that hilltop. I rang the great resounding front-door bell, and the stately portal was opened by an old gentleman in a shawl, who reminded me of the Duke of Wellington in his appearance. I introduced myself, and mentioned his cousin, of whom we

talked awhile, and then I stated my errand, at which he gave a somewhat malicious chuckle and showed me into an immense library, which occupied one wing of the great house and looked about a mile long. It was full of débris, pictures without frames, frames without pictures, old rocking-horses without heads, and was lined with immense old bookshelves, reaching to ceilings that seemed to touch the sky. 'Now you can have a look, and you must let me give you luncheon later,' he said, and then he disappeared.

It was a cold day in November; the library was unheated, and I felt the beginnings of a violent cold upon me. My despair at the gigantic search in prospect (which would have required weeks at least for its satisfactory performance) can be imagined; but still I felt that, having come so far, I must take at least a look. While I was doing this, I happened to see the colonel with two maiden ladies (whom I afterwards found to be his daughters) staring at me through an immense window from the terrace outside. By great good fortune I found within half an hour the book I was looking for, and saw at once that it was of even greater interest than I had hoped, as it contained copies of many of Wotton's unpublished letters, a number of documents concerning his first embassy at Venice (1604-1610), and a large collection of notes of 'table talk,' kept by someone in his household at Venice during that period, with many anecdotes about Queen Elizabeth, James I, Henry IV, Bacon and Essex, and various personages of the time, as well as a number of poems by Donne and others, a copy of Donne's *Paradoxes*, with a long unpublished letter of Donne's sent with them, and a number of other early, unpublished letters by Donne, some signed and some unsigned, all of which had escaped Horwood's notice when he examined the manuscript.

I took the book to the colonel's study, where there was a good fire, and where the old gentleman sat reading *The Times*; occasionally I caught his eye, staring at me over its pages as if he were asking himself what sort of creature I could be to take so great an interest in old papers.

When at last I hinted that it would take me more than an afternoon to master and copy out the contents of this volume, he most kindly asked me to come and pay him a visit for this purpose. I was, of course, delighted to accept this invitation, and spent several days in this great seventeenth-century palace, whose wide terraces overlooked perhaps the most famous of English hunting countries. I had my meals with the colonel and his daughters, and attended divine service with them in the chapel of the house. They all treated me with the perfect courtesy of their class, and made no attempt to find out who I was, or what motive had induced me to engage in this (to them) so incomprehensible a form of sport. They were too polite to ask any questions, while I refrained from giving any kind of information on the subject.

When I found that the period of my visit was insufficient for an adequate study of the contents of this book, I arranged with the Oxford Press to purchase its copyright, and to have the volume sent to Oxford for careful copies to be made. Professor Grierson came to Oxford to examine the poems, which he afterwards published in his masterly edition of Donne's poems. I remember that when he and I were shut up together to examine this volume in a big room at the top of the Clarendon Press, Satan tempted me to make the suggestion that it would be rather fun to insert among these perfectly unknown notes of table talk some chance remark about Bacon as a playwright which might set the Baconians agog; and I remember Grierson's

expression of horror at this suggestion, which it is indeed lucky we did not carry out, since, shortly after the volume was returned to the place where I had found it, the house was burnt down and the manuscript destroyed.

I published the letters of Wotton and the table talk (with which, I need hardly say, I did not tamper) in my *Life of Wotton*. The letters of Donne (which were of great interest) were published by Mrs. Simpson in her *Study of the Prose Works of John Donne*, and reprinted by John Hayward in the *Nonesuch Donne*.

II

Some years later, when Mrs. Toynbee was editing Horace Walpole's letters, as I happened to be specially interested in Walpole at the time, I wrote to her (although I did not know her) saying that I hoped she would print more of Walpole's letters to Madame du Deffand, since the extracts from them published by Miss Berry seemed to me of such interest and merit. She replied that she would gladly do so, but that the box containing the Walpole-Du Deffand correspondence had not been traced since its sale at Strawberry Hill in 1842, and that no one knew where it was. Encouraged, I suppose, by a series of other successes in hunting for manuscripts in country houses, I replied with a rashness which now seems to me incredible that I would find that box for her if she would tell me all she knew about it. She replied that it was supposed to have been bought at Strawberry Hill by a man of Asiatic origin named Dyce-Sombre, and that nothing had been heard of it since.

I looked up the history of the purchaser of this box, and found that it was an extraordinary one. His great-grandfather was a German carpenter, who went to India in 1754 and, becom-

ing a soldier in the service of several native princes, acquired the appellation of Sombre — from his serious cast of countenance — instead of his German name Reinhard, and was given by the emperor of Delhi the principality of Sirdhama. This passed on his death to his wife, a dancing girl, who became the begum of that state. Sombre in the meantime had begotten by a concubine a son called Zuffer yah Khan. Zuffer Khan died, leaving a daughter, who married George Alexander Dyce, the commandant of the begum's forces. The son by this marriage inherited half a million sterling from the begum at her decease, and added the name of Sombre to that of Dyce. He became a Roman Catholic, and was created by the Pope a chevalier of the Order of Christ, in consideration of the very large gifts the begum had made to his Holiness.

In 1838, Dyce-Sombre came to England, where he married the daughter of an English peer. He entered Parliament and then a lunatic asylum, and died in 1851; and his wife, from whom he had been long separated, married a man of fortune who was afterwards created a peer under the title of Lord F. His title and estate were inherited by his son.

It was with this begum's money that the desired box had been purchased; and I had a feeling, what is called a 'hunch,' that the box was now in the possession, and reposed in the country house, of Lord F.

I cannot account for this hunch, but it amounted to so strong a conviction that I began again my tedious process of trying to establish some sort of relation with this backwoods peer, who lived in Staffordshire, and of whom no one I met seemed to have ever heard. At last I met in Florence a young man who told me that this Lord F. was the intimate friend of his cousin, the Dean of York, and suggested that I should

write to the Dean, saying that he had told me I might do so. This suggestion I adopted; and after making inquiries as to how a letter to a Dean should be properly addressed, I sent a polite epistle to the Very Reverend gentleman (who I found was himself a man of letters, having written a book on *The Heraldry of York Minster*). I received a most courteous reply from the Dean, who said yes, Lord F. was a friend of his, and that I had better write to him, telling him that he (the Dean) had told me to do so. I thereupon wrote to Lord F., delicately suggesting that the Dean of York was a great pal of mine, and asking him if he happened to possess among his archives this box from Strawberry Hill.

Thereupon I waited for some weeks, perhaps a month or two, but received no answer. Then came a letter from Mrs. Toynbee, reminding me that I had agreed to find these letters, and telling me that she was holding up her edition of Walpole for them — and well, so to speak, what about it? I sat down and wrote a letter of apology to the irritated lady, saying that I had been far too presumptuous in making this promise, in which I regretted to say that I had completely failed.

I was living in the country at the time, and used to walk to the village post office every day to get my letters and post those which I had written that morning. Before dropping my letter to Mrs. Toynbee in the box, I opened one addressed to me, which turned out to be from Lord F. himself, in which he wrote, with many apologies, to say that he had mislaid my note and had only come on it that morning; whereupon he had gone up to his attic and had found there the box about which I had written, and which he had had no notion that he possessed. It would be, he feared, of no interest to me, as he had found, on examining the letters in it, that some autograph

collector had cut off the signatures from them. However, he politely added, if I cared to come to Staffordshire he would put the box at my disposal, to make any use I wished of its contents. He ended with messages of regard to our common friend, the Dean of York. I tore up my first letter, therefore, to Mrs. Toynbee, and went home to write another to her, in which I said that, having promised to find this box, I had, of course, done so, and that it was now in Lord F.'s attic in Staffordshire, and if she would write to him, mentioning my name and that of the Dean of York, he would no doubt put it at her disposal.

Thereupon Mrs. Toynbee (with, I think, her husband, Paget Toynbee) went leaping up to Staffordshire, and found that the box contained even greater treasures than she could have hoped for — hundreds and hundreds of unpublished letters from Madame du Deffand, who was only second in fame as a letter writer to Madame de Sévigné. They were all annotated (evidently for publication) by Horace Walpole himself, and among them were a certain number of Walpole's own letters, though he seems to have destroyed most of these on account of the bad French in which he believed that they had been written. Mrs. Toynbee spent some years in preparing a scholarly edition of these manuscripts, and this edition was published in three big volumes, after her death, by her husband.

I confess that my fisherman's vanity was a little hurt by the fact that no copy of this book was sent to me, and that my share in this catch was not referred to. This, however, may have been due to the fact that Mrs. Toynbee was dead when her husband brought out the book. Scholars I have almost always found to be most scrupulous in the acknowledgments of their debts to me, and I have always tried to observe

this rule of courtesy myself. I am not altogether pleased to find that I am not exempt from the touchiness of these folk.

III

My last experience of this sport I should like to put on record — not that I have any grievance to air, but because I think it may prove one day of interest to literary historians. I happened to see last year in David Alec Wilson's portentous life of Carlyle a quotation from a letter of Carlyle's to Lord Ashburton in the possession of a certain noble marquis. Again that voice told me that this peer had somewhere in his possession the whole Carlyle-Ashburton correspondence. So I began trying to find someone who was acquainted with him; and at last a lady who was a friend of mine told me that she knew him and his wife very well, and promised to ask them when she next saw them whether they had these letters. Not long after she wrote to say that she had inquired, and that they said they did n't have them and knew nothing about them. I replied that I thought her noble friends might do well to have another look, as one letter at least had been seen not long ago by Carlyle's biographer. Shortly afterwards I received a note which I first thought was the rudest and then saw was one of the kindest I had ever received from one of these noble but unlettered personages who so curiously combine incivility to strangers with generosity and courtesy to anyone who may seem to have some connection with anyone of their class.

The letter was addressed to 'Mr. (or Mrs.) L. P. Smith,' and, beginning 'Dear Sir or Madam,' stated that the writer had received two scrawls from my friend, neither of which he could read, and so thought it better to write to me direct. He had, he said, the Carlyle letters, but they were of a

distinctly personal nature, being addressed to members of his family now deceased. He had looked at them, but could not see that they possessed any interest; however, he would be delighted to lend me typewritten copies of them, if I would undertake to submit to him any extracts from them before I made use of them for publication.

I of course answered that I should be very glad to see these copies, and I offered to pay to have them made. No notice was taken of this offer; and in a few months I received a heap of typewritten copies of the Carlyle correspondence — 256 letters of Carlyle's, 27 of Mrs. Carlyle's, and other documents concerning the relations of the Carlyles and the Ashburtons, all of them unpublished. Of Carlyle's letters 121 were to the first Lady Ashburton (Lady Harriet Baring), 94 to the second, and 41 to Lord Ashburton, the whole correspondence covering a period of thirty-four years.

I found them very interesting reading — Carlyle being to my mind one of the best of letter writers, and Mrs. Carlyle, of course, always fascinating. Carlyle was at his best in writing to the Barings. The letters to Lady Harriet show that he was considerably bewitched by this great lady, and that Mrs. Carlyle had good reason to be jealous. Her successor, Louisa, Lady Ashburton, was of a very different character, and proved herself to be the good angel of Carlyle, and also of Mrs. Carlyle, with whom she formed a most devoted friendship. She too was a clever woman, who, after the death of her husband, became engaged to Robert Browning. But she broke off the engagement, to his great indignation, in which he is supposed to have written the famous lines: —

Would it were I had been false, not you!
I that am nothing, not you that are all:
I, never the worse for a touch or two
On my speckled hide.

The owner of these letters wrote me that I could print extracts from them, but that he would reserve the right of refusing, even at the last moment, to allow any extract to be printed. The whole correspondence he would not permit to be published, as he did not want to have anyone making money out of the friendships of his relations. I did not feel like undertaking any publication under the supervision of this kind but arbitrary, unlettered, and (as I gathered from his letters) somewhat pompous nobleman. I therefore returned them to him, with due thanks for letting me see them, and they are still in his possession. I feel that a book ought sometime to be made of them, since the friendship of the Carlyles with the Ashburtons was the most important friendship of their lives, and in writing to all three of them both the Carlyles wrote their best. Through friends and relations of the owner of these manuscripts I have made several attempts to obtain permission for such a volume to be edited and published by some competent person, but so far my efforts have been in vain. But one day no doubt these letters will see the light. They will make a volume full of good reading and of important literary interest.

IV

Only the other day I had a queer experience, and thought for a moment that I had heard that plaguy Voice again. I was sitting at luncheon by a lady who is a scholar of repute, and, speaking of manuscripts, she told me that her first job was to catalogue the manuscripts and books at Gorhambury for the Lord Verulam of the time. She said that in poking about, somewhat indiscreetly, in an old cupboard, she had found, under a heap of rubbish, a number of old playbills of Shakespeare's plays. She found that in fact her search had been an indiscretion;

Lord Verulam did not want anything to be known about these playbills, as he had been much bothered by Baconian cranks and did not care to have them after him again.

Playbills of Shakespeare's age are, I believe, unknown, and that bills of some of Shakespeare's plays should be found in the home of Bacon's heir seemed to me a suggestion full of disagreeable possibilities, but one which perhaps it was my duty as a scholar to follow up. On writing, however, to the lady in question, I received the following reassuring reply.

Yes, I really did say we found Shakespearean playbills at Gorhambury in 1911 or thereabouts — but while old they were far from being contemporary. They would be waste of a scholar's time — if they still exist — but would in those days have provided a lot of healthy exercise for a Baconian Heretic.

In this sport of hunting for manuscripts in English country houses, either I have had extraordinary luck, or else such houses are full of treasures (think, for instance, of the Paston Letters!) for those who will take the trouble to hunt for them. But it is necessary to acquire the technique of pursuing this form of chase — a form, to my mind, superior in interest to that of fishing for big fish

or of hunting foxes. And not only are there letters to reward the hunters. In the last year or two a manuscript of the first literary importance has been discovered in an old country house, *The Book of Marjorie Kempe*, a frank autobiography written in the most vivid and enchanting style, and full of incredible avowals. It is by centuries the earliest autobiography in English, and indeed a great open window into the life of the early fifteenth century.

Commonplace books full of contemporary verse abound also in old libraries, which have never been examined by persons with a taste for poetry of merit. Many Elizabethans wrote beautiful poems which they never thought of printing, but circulated among their friends, who made copies of them. I have already mentioned the beautiful unpublished verses in the volume of Wotton's letters which I found, some of which have appeared in recent anthologies. The only other volume I know of which has been examined from the point of view of literary merit is the volume, now famous, in the Christ Church library, in which poems were found of surpassing beauty that have become permanent additions to our treasure of Elizabethan poetry.

SPIDER AND FLY

BY SONIA RAIZISS

THE spider achieves his cornered home
Against a soft and sheltering dark.
A faint diaphanous lair,
A slack grace in careful air,
This radiant tomb
Hung high in morning's room
Awaits the sudden prodigals
That go upon a too fantastic lark.

The reveling fly careers about the walls,
Exploring time athwart its space
In gay and foolish flight. . . .
The vacant lace
Serenely swings into a pulse of light
And then swings back.
Incurious, the spider curls within a crack,
Discreet and out of sight.

Like a drunken roisterer the fly gyrates
And reels into the vague complacent net!
Young freedom shocked into a thing
Like very death hangs swaying — and then still.
The honeyed web, long-spun of plotter's sweat
To artless labyrinths, insinuates
The ooze about a rainbow wing
That starts a rapid thrill
And innocently lifts the maze to rend it free.
Soon the zoom of agony
Begins to sing along the roof.
The spider feigns a scornful pose,
And sits aloof.

Convulsions jeopardize the gentle jail:
No frenzied wing or hurtling body can avail
To snap the silken bars when those
Are twisted tenuous of subtlety.

The humming and vibrations spend until they fail. . . .
Exhaustion sprawls the fly,
Hushes the throb, and clouds the eye.

Manceuvre: the spider stirs,
Swings along his balusters,
And lightly sidles through the air;
Tentative, he fingers . . . but afraid
Of victory, retreats into his ambushade.

The fly is pricked to second anguish,
Finally ferments the web
With delirious despair:
The capers of a puppet at his string-ends languish —
The frantic music and the torment ebb. . . .

Now the spider elegantly mounts the torn
Retaining stair
Of suave insistent silk.
At the funeral feast, compounded with the body's milk,
He dines upon the twitching corpse clean-shorn
Of tuneful wings and six betraying
Legs; the rent and fraying
Arras beaded with the legend of these bare
And alien fragments flaunts the torso and the head.

The false fat mourner leaves forlorn
The web, the welter and the woe,
Leaves the lost, the dead,
On delicate tiptoe. . . .

STORM RISING IN PALESTINE

BY PIERRE CRABITÈS

I

I HOPE that I am mistaken. I hope that I have misinterpreted what I have seen and heard. But I have lived for twenty-five years in the Near East, and have made quite a few visits to Palestine and at all times kept in touch with men and women who are intimately acquainted with that country. On the eve of my return to the United States, I received a circumstantial account of conditions which obtain in the Holy Land. It filled me with grave concern. I have, however, been flabbergasted to note that it is totally at variance with what seems to be the unanimous opinion of my Jewish friends here at home. They appear to be entirely unconscious of the martyrdom that is awaiting their brethren in Palestine.

A news item in yesterday's paper accentuates this blissful ignorance. It makes it clear to me that American Jews are living in a fools' paradise. Not only are they misinformed, but speakers whose good faith I do not question seem to be bent upon making it doubly difficult for them to grasp the truth in its bold, unpalatable hideousness. They know that they are in the right. They thus are more than ready to listen to what they are told by these witnesses from abroad, who are not dishonest, but whose sense of perspective, I am afraid, is all out of focus.

The address which prompted me to write this article is typical of scores of others which are heard in this country

from time to time. It was delivered by a Christian, an international newspaper correspondent of note. He had recently returned from Palestine. He described the Holy Land as 'a modern miracle where the Jews have pushed back the desert and made a land of gardens where there was formerly an arid wilderness.'

This is the truth; I do not gainsay it. And I do not challenge the accuracy of his statements that 'Arab laborers receive five times the wages they receive in any neighboring country' and that their general health is better than that of near-by peoples. What I question is the deduction which he draws from these premises. He is such an honest optimist that he is convinced that the benefits resulting from the Jewish influx will eventually counteract the influence of what he calls the 'Arab landlord class.' He speaks of 'false issues' and of 'occasional outbursts by the controlled Arab masses.' He then adds:—

'The feudalist landlords, who are only a handful, but who own three fifths of all the land in Palestine and who exploit the masses of Arab peasants, will rouse these masses against the Jews, because the Jews raise the standard of living of the masses and in this way weaken the hold of the landlord classes.'

The impression left by this speaker upon his audience is that the 'spiritual

strength' of the Jews and the obvious advantages flowing from their economic and industrial achievements will in the near future put an end to these occasional outbursts. 'I believe that the day is coming fast,' are his exact words. And he continues, 'The law of God will not perhaps take the form of liturgy and ritual, but the form of a new commonwealth based on justice as an inspiration and a model to all mankind.'

It is my fervent prayer that this prophecy will come true. I am afraid, however, that it oversimplifies the matter. It attaches undue importance to the golden key. It places proper stress upon the 'spiritual strength' of the Jews, but it unfortunately overlooks the 'spiritual strength' of the Arabs. It attributes too great an influence to 'feudalist landlords.' It loses sight of the Arab soul. It forgets that the Arabs, as well as the Jews, are able to invoke international covenants. It fails to recognize the religious aspirations of the Arabs, their racial claims, their historical background, and their preparedness to die to defend their rights. In brief, it brushes aside factors that are bigger than any issues which 'feudalist landlords' could call into being and keep alive.

II

I was in an admirable strategic position to follow what I may call the genesis of the international covenants which the Arabs invoke in behalf of their contention that Palestine was promised to them by Europe before it was deeded over to the Jews. Shortly after the outbreak of the Great War, I took up my abode at the Continental Hotel in Cairo, Egypt, and saw there a great deal of Lawrence and Storrs and Jacobs and the other English 'green tab' men who spoke Arabic and who knew the Arab mind. They made that hotel their headquarters. It was

obvious to everybody that they were very busy men.

I made no attempt to find out specifically what they were doing. America was neutral in those days, and it would have been as impolitic as it would have been suicidal for me to seek to do so. But, when Turkey cast in her lot with Germany and Austria, the Allies had no further interest in concealing why Lawrence and Storrs and Jacobs were so active in those parts.

England boldly proclaimed that she was proud to lend her aid to the Arabs to enable them to throw off the Turkish yoke. She announced to the world that no peace would be signed until the independence of the Arabs had been achieved. She permitted the heavily censored Arabic press of Egypt to print editorials stressing the fact that from the embers of the condemned Turkish power a great Arabic Empire would spring into being.

I have just referred to what took place during the autumn of 1914, the winter of 1914-1915, and the spring and summer of 1915. In the fall of the latter year, when it became obvious that the war was destined to last another winter, the Arabs demanded that England incorporate her assurances in an international pact. An agreement was, accordingly, entered into between Great Britain and the Sherif of Mecca. It was dated October 24, 1915. It stated specifically that England bound herself to 'recognize and support the independence of the Arabs' within certain well-defined territories, provided the Arabs would help the Allies to defeat the Turks.

I do not set forth here the territorial limits thus nominated in the bond for the simple reason that the words 'Palestine' and 'Holy Land' do not appear there. The Arabs contend that the geographical expressions used, the district of Homs, Aleppo, and Damascus, embrace Palestine. The Jews deny

this. I prefer to allow this issue to remain unsolved. All that I am now endeavoring to do is to set forth the Arab point of view. It is this point of view which will direct the knives that are now being sharpened to cut Jewish throats.

Frankly, I can see no reason for brushing aside the Arab contention that the treaty of October 24, 1915 covers Palestine. I say this without basing my contention upon the territorial areas just referred to, but because in October 1915 practically nobody outside of the Zionists gave the slightest thought to the national aspirations of the Jews. The Arabs then held the whip hand. They could have made peace with the Turks had their demands not been met. If I refer to the matter it is not because I am giving my support to the Arab argument but because I deem it essential that the good faith of the Arabs be understood.

Men who have lived honorable lives are not prepared to shoot down their neighbors unless they believe that a great wrong menaces them. It is because I feel it is my duty to emphasize the peril that awaits the Jews of Palestine that I place such stress upon the moral force of the Arab contention growing out of the solemn agreement of October 24, 1915.

Twenty-four months were destined to elapse before the Jews were accorded what I may call an international status. It was the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917 that gave it to them. Let me quote its terms: 'His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of that object, it being understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights

and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other country.'

As far as I know, the Arabs did not object to this Balfour Declaration. They had lived in harmony with the Jews since A.D. 640, when the Muslims became the dominant factors in the Near East. I have chosen this date because it was then that Omar conquered Jerusalem. At that time Jerusalem was under Christian control, and the Jews were not its masters. But this detail is immaterial. The point is that when the Muslims took over the Holy Land in the seventh century they made tolerance their watchword and they did not persecute the Jews.

I can well understand why the Arabs, as a whole, viewed the Balfour Declaration with such complacency. It emanated from England. It bore the date of November 2, 1917, and they had an antecedent categorical promise from the same Power which guaranteed their independence. To have interpreted the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917 as an impairment, an amendment, a revocation of the Covenant of October 24, 1915, would have been to doubt the sincerity of England. Such a conception never crossed the Arab mind.

It did, however, cross the Turkish mind. Ottoman spies told the Arabs that the English had betrayed them and had made over Palestine to the Jews. The Arabs forgot about England. They thought only of Lawrence. He personified Britain to them. He was their friend. They believed in him. He told them that there was no justification for this libel, that they had his word and Britain's plighted troth. They held fast to their bargain and after November 2, 1917 fought as bravely for the Allies as they had done before that date.

The autumn of 1918 witnessed the impending collapse of the forces of the Central Powers. At the moment when victory was in sight, France associated

herself with England in rewriting, as it were, the international agreement of October 24, 1915 between Great Britain and the Sherif of Mecca. I refer to the Franco-British Military Proclamation of November 7, 1918, which reads in part as follows: 'The aim which France and Great Britain have in view in prosecuting in the East the war let loose by German ambition is the complete and final liberation of the peoples so long oppressed by the Turks and the establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the native population.'

With this proclamation of November 7, 1918 in one hand, and the English guarantee of October 24, 1915 in the other, the Arabs say to the Jews: 'If you hold that your Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917 supersedes our rights growing out of the October 24, 1915 promise, by the same token this Franco-British proclamation of November 7, 1918 wipes out your Balfour Declaration.'

I do not pass upon the legal aspects of this argument, but I do say that it is convincing to the Arab mind and that Arabs who have no criminal antecedents are determined to kill Jews to sustain it.

I vividly recall what took place in the Near East during the winter of 1917-1918 and the spring of 1918. President Wilson was then making the welkin ring with his plea for 'self-determination.' Every time he thundered, the highly censored Arabic press of Cairo reproduced his words with embellishments, emphasis, and full orchestration. 'Self-determination' was the recurring note of British propaganda because England was out to defeat the Turks and she required Arab support to facilitate the accomplishment of this task.

I emphasize this battle cry of 'self-determination,' stressed until November 11, 1918 and anathema after that

date, because it was music to the ears of the Arabs. When this Franco-British proclamation of November 7, 1918 was issued, there were in Palestine, I am reliably informed, eight Arabs to one Jew. It thus follows that when this ukase spoke of 'the establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the native population,' it used terms which the Arabs interpret as making them the masters of the Holy Land.

This deduction may be erroneous. I do not say that it is sound. I am convinced, however, that law-abiding Arabs are determined to snipe every Jew that they can in order to make good their construction of it, and they do not require any advice from 'feudalist landlords' to get them to do so. This is the condition and not the theory that I fear my Jewish friends in this country fail to understand.

When the Great War ended, the Treaty of Versailles did not pass upon the fate of Palestine, in the sense of attributing it either to Jews or to Arabs. The Treaty was signed on June 28, 1919. The Arabs assumed this meant that the principle of self-determination would be applied, and that, while they outnumbered the Jews in the proportion of eight to one, a referendum of some sort would have to be held to put them in the saddle, subject to the supervisory control of the Power to whom the mandate over Palestine would be given.

It was not until July 24, 1922, or until the Arabs had cherished this hope for three years, that England was given her mandate over Palestine. Article II of this document reads: 'The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political administration as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home, as laid down in the Preamble, and the development of self-governing institutions, and

also for safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race.' Article III ordains that 'the Mandatory shall, as far as circumstances permit, encourage local autonomy.'

I am perfectly willing to admit that as a question of law this mandate given England by the Conference of Ambassadors primes all the promises made by England to the Arabs in 1915 and by England and France in 1919. But the Arabs are deaf to all arguments of a juridical nature. They are determined to kill every Jew who crosses their path in order to protect what they consider not only their birthright but an independence won by them on the field of battle. And the circumstance that for three long years they cherished the illusion that the Treaty of Versailles had answered their prayer made them so wild with anger when the terms of Britain's Mandate became known that ever since July 24, 1922 they have been itching to shoot down every Jew.

III

I repeat that the addresses now being made to American audiences by honest advocates of the Jewish cause overlook the religious aspirations of the Arabs. It is irrelevant to describe the Holy Land as 'a modern miracle where the Jews have pushed back the desert and made a land of gardens where there was formerly an arid wilderness.' It serves no useful purpose to emphasize the fact that 'Arab laborers in Palestine receive five times the wages they receive in any neighboring country.' It is meaningless to talk about 'feudalist landlords' who rouse the masses against the Jews.

Semitic Jews did not abandon their careers in Europe and America because they were lured to the Holy Land by the prospect of converting an arid wilderness into a garden of oranges.

They were not tempted by the possibility of getting five times more for their capital in Tel Aviv than they could get in Warsaw. And Semitic Arabs love Palestine for the same reasons that the Jews love it. I refer to the Muslim Arab as well as the Christian Arab. In this fight against the Jew, the latter is sharpening his knife and oiling his trigger with the same single-mindedness of purpose as his Muhammadan neighbor.

Carlyle once said that no religious zealot takes his religion as seriously as does the Muslim. With this point in mind, let me state:—

1. That Islam looks upon Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and all the great prophets of the Old Testament with the same respect and love as do the Jews.

2. That Jerusalem is one of the Holy Cities of Islam, yielding the palm only to the twin cities of Mecca and Medina.

3. That the Muslims believe that Muhammad in making his exploratory ascent to Heaven took off from what the Jews call the Temple Area.

4. That this site of the Temple Area, sacred to the Jews because it contains the Wailing Wall, is just as sacred to the Muslims for two reasons: (a) On this Temple Area stands the Mosque, enclosing the rock which shows the imprint of the hoof of Muhammad's horse when the Prophet pushed off in making his plunge heavenwards; (b) the Wailing Wall itself is the Holy Burak of the Muhammadans, made most holy to them because it was touched by Muhammad himself.

All of which should be clear indication that the Arabs are just as ready to die to keep the Holy Land as the Jews are to sustain their claim to it.

I am tempted, however, to say another word about the Wailing Wall. If I am not greatly mistaken, it is the magnet that draws many Jewish visitors to Palestine. I wonder how many

of my American Jewish friends know that this Wailing Wall has been considered Muhammadan property since A.D. 691. From the Muslim point of view it forms an integral part of that area which the Quran in Sura XVII, I, calls blessed or *Haram*. As far back as A.D. 1321 the Wakf of Abu Median Al Goth Shuaib was created to endow it and maintain it and the approaches leading to it. In other words, if we make up our minds to save the Jews who pray before the Holy Wall from having their throats cut, we should begin by recalling that the Wailing Wall is also the Holy Burak and that the Quran itself made it into one of the sacred shrines of Islam.

IV

I have many friends among the Jewish leaders of the Near East. I have always played the game fairly and squarely with them. They trust me. I frequented their homes; they honored me by accepting my hospitality. Their friendships I cherish. But I should like to refer to a conversation which I had with a Muslim friend just as I was leaving Cairo. I shall not mention his name, but I vouch for his outstanding position in the world of Islam, for the bigness of his heart and the sobriety of his judgment. He moves in the best Jewish circle in Cairo. I have met him at the dinner table of Joseph Aslan Cattau Pasha, the hereditary head of the Jewish Community in Cairo. Everybody loves him.

I said to him, when I was taking leave of him: 'Pasha, we are old friends. You have just returned from Palestine. You know everybody over there. Tell me what is what.' We spoke in French. His first words were: '*Monsieur le Président, la situation m'effraie.*' (Mr. President, the situation frightens me.) And he went on to tell me how fond he was of Cattau Pasha

and others of our friends, and of how his heart bled for the Jews. But he added:—

'Palestine is our heritage. It is our country as much as it is that of the Jews. We are seven Arabs to one Jew. Even with this majority, which is our trump card, we are not allowed to rule. Hitler is driving Jews out of Germany and they are being brought into Palestine surreptitiously. The English are closing their eyes to this contraband importation of Jews. Our landlords have been tempted and have sold many estates to Jews. An Arab cannot find work if there is a Jew unemployed anywhere in his neighborhood. Arabs have to live. They are therefore emigrating. We thus have a Jewish immigration, both legal and contraband, and an Arab emigration. This means that the Arab majority, which was once ten to one, then nine to one, and eight to one, and which is now seven to one, will soon dwindle to nothing. We must preserve Palestine for our race. This means that we *must* kill the Jews and keep on killing them until England finds that it will be cheaper to stop driving Arabs to desperation and inciting Muslims to revolt.'

I am convinced that there are fundamental errors in this statement. It has not been established to my satisfaction that Jews are discriminating against Arab labor, although I heard this charge on other occasions. I have no proof of the allegation that England is conniving at the immigration of Jews in excess of the legal quota. I have had no evidence submitted to me that Jews are being bootlegged into Palestine, with or without the knowledge of the authorities. But, what difference does it make whether these bills of indictment are well founded or not if the Arabs are prepared to kill Jews because of their profound conviction that every one of these accusations is well founded?

I say that it behooves all friends of

the Jews to realize the seriousness of the situation and to attempt to find a constructive solution for it.

History teaches that Islam does not persecute Jews. Muhammadans have not maltreated the Jews who were governed by them. There have been no Rumanian or Russian pogroms imputable to Muslim overlords. Arabs and Jews lived side by side in Palestine in peace and amity during the years preceding that unfortunate decision of July 24, 1922 which destroyed the hopes and aspirations of the Arabs and turned them into men whose religious and racial instincts inspire them to kill Jews.

During my visits to Palestine, I asked every non-Jewish foreigner with whom I could speak frankly to tell me what should be the starting point in any serious attempt to solve the problem which confronted the Holy Land. They all said: 'Repeal Article II of the Mandate for Palestine. It is this section that makes the Balfour Declara-

tion the law of the land. If that is done, the leaders of the Arabs and Jews can get together and work out a *modus vivendi*. They are not so very far apart if this difficulty can be removed.'

The only other solution is the maintenance in Palestine of an armed British force of such size and equipment that it will overawe the Arabs. In this connection, may I submit certain pertinent questions?

1. How long will the British taxpayer stand this heavy burden?

2. How long will the millions of British Muslim subjects elsewhere submit to a policy that is anathema to Islam?

3. How long will Mussolini refrain from posing as the champion of Muhammadan aspirations, and from stirring up the Arabs of Palestine?

4. How long will England consider that the safety of the Suez Canal is assured if on its eastern shore there is a hostile Arab population?

THE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

BY DELLA T. LUTES

I

THE Strawberry Festival was not so fixed an annual observance in our community as the Sunday School picnic, for instance, but it was recognized as one of those social affairs designed to further some worthy cause.

Upon one occasion which I remember as well for the calamity that nearly befell as for the luscious feast that it was, the actuating need was a suddenly disclosed but apparently overwhelming demand for new hymnbooks for the church. Mis' Lou Esty, besides being seamstress-by-the-week for the neighborhood, sometimes went to the City to sew for more fashionable patrons, and invariably brought back some innovations for our improvement. She it was who introduced the stylish method of placing the twirled napkin in our goblets, and it was she again who came home from one of these urban visits filled with zeal for a more modern version of tuneful praise than was afforded by the old hymnbooks. She was a considerable leader in all church affairs, including the choir, where her somewhat nasal soprano soared stridently above all other voices, and if Mis' Esty found the old hymnbooks wanting, there were none to argue. All the town churches, she said, had new hymnbooks with brighter, livelier tunes than the old ones, and less morbid words.

'You take that one now,' she was telling my mother one night in late May, as they did the dishes together in

our kitchen, 'about "Hark, from the tomb a doleful sound." That ain't no kind of a tune to sing where there's children.'

Mis' Esty had no real home of her own except a room over at Bouldrys', where, as she sometimes said, she went between threading one needle and another. She was a sociable body, however, and didn't favor staying long in her one room, so she often came to our house to stay a few days at a time. The most of her sewing for country families was done in February and March before women got too busy with house cleaning, gardening, and chickens, so here she was now, telling us about the new hymnbooks folks were buying in town. My mother, ever alert for signs of progress in the outside world, agreed with her.

'I never thought it was any kind of a hymn for anybody,' she said, wringing out her dishcloth and hanging it to dry behind the stove. 'What kind of tunes has this new one got?'

'Well, there's one that goes —' Mis' Lou Esty, the ends of a linen dish towel held in her two hands like a baton, broke into a rather shrill treble, keeping time with nodding head, rhythmic towel, and the faintest suggestion of swaying hips: —

*'B-ring-ing in the sheaves,
B-ring-ing in the sheaves,
We shall come re-joic-ing
B-ring-ing in the sheaves.'*

My mother stood at respectful and admiring attention, her hands folded lightly across the full gathers of her apron.

'My!' she said, as Mis' Esty concluded her performance and the glow of ecstasy faded from her face, 'that is nice. I'd like to hear the whole of it.'

My father, his paper lowered, head bent that he might peer over his steel-rimmed glasses, grunted.

'Don't you like it, Mr. Thompson?' asked Mis' Esty unwisely. She never did learn that the better part of wisdom, in dealing with my father, was not to question him unless you wanted bitter truth.

'Good enough song,' he replied gruffly, 'if you're tryin' to beat a thunderstorm in harvestin'. Can't see what it's got to do with *religion*, though.'

'Why, that's plain,' Mis' Esty told him fatuously. 'It just means if you're good, why — why —'

My father snorted and raised his paper. 'When you get a new hymn-book,' he told her shortly, 'that'll beat "Rock of Ages," you let me know.'

II

Nevertheless, Mis' Esty found a sufficient number of adherents to further her plan, and the church voted to buy new hymnbooks. The next thing was to get the money with which to buy them. The Strawberry Festival was the final plan, and this was also Mis' Esty's idea.

'I told 'em,' she reported at our house as we sat at supper on the evening after the meeting of the Ladies' Aid where the decision was made, 't I knew Mr. Thompson'd donate the berries. You'd do that, would n't you, Mr. Thompson?'

Two things among a considerable number of others my father hated were

familiarity or any imposition upon his dignity, and having someone else make promises for him. Few people who knew him ever ventured either trespass, but Mis' Esty, although doubtless talented as a costumer, was a little weak in her perceptions. She now waited in smiling confidence as my father fidgeted with his knife and fork, spilled his tea, and grew dark of brow. My mother watched him with knowing apprehension.

'Wa-a-l,' he drawled finally, 'if I'd a — been *asked* about it, I'd a — prob'ly looked into it.'

'My goodness!' exploded Mis' Esty. 'I *told* you about it. They want to get new hymnbooks.'

'Yes,' said my father, helping himself elaborately to a second supply of cold dandelion greens and fried potatoes, 'I heard tell they did — some of 'em.'

'Well!' Mis' Esty's voice registered both impatience and indignation. 'The Ladies' Aid decided on it. And we all thought you'd donate the berries. You're always givin' away berries.'

'Yes,' said my father, liberally spreading freshly churned butter on freshly baked bread, 'that's one reason I grow 'em. To give 'em away — when I want to.'

Always there came a certain point in the domestic relations of our family when my mother's tolerant understanding and tactful handling would bring at least a cessation of argument.

'Why, yes,' she now intervened, 'we're always glad to share our berries — what we don't sell — if we have plenty. How does the berry crop look, 'Lijer?' Thus did she divert his attention from hymns to horticulture.

'Well,' said my father, pushing his chair back from the table and brushing a crumb from his vest, 'they flowered good. If we don't have a frost — but strawberries is about the reskiest crop

the' is . . .' And the contract for donating strawberries for the Festival, while not enthusiastically given, was, nevertheless, tacitly assured. The weather was all that could be desired; the crop promised abundance. Preparations for the Festival proceeded, with no threat of halt in the performance until a committee of ladies came to our house one day in June to discuss the form of refreshments. The decision was retailed to my father at the conclusion of the evening meal.

'You mean to tell *me*,' he shouted, turning on my mother, who was clearing the table, 'that they're goin' to put them berries into *pies*?'

'Why, yes.' Even my mother, who was used to his outbursts, — quite harmless except in ferocity of tone, — was surprised at the violence of his manner. 'Strawberries make a *good* pie — if you make it right.'

'Strawberries ain't *meant* for pie! What in the name of *Tophet*'s the sense of spoiling *strawberries* puttin' 'em into a *pie*?'

'Well,' expostulated my mother a little worriedly, 'I s'pose they've got a right to put the strawberries into pies if they want to. They thought it'd be a change.'

'Not *my* strawberries, they ain't! Why, 'Miry,' he took a step toward her that by a stranger might have been interpreted as threatening. To my mother and me — a little girl dressing a Maltese cat in hood and mittens — he was just Pa, making a fuss about something to eat. 'Why, 'Miry, it'd be a *crime* to put the only kind of fruit on earth that's fit for a shortcake into a pie that almost anything can be put into.'

'You would n't think,' said my mother dryly, continuing now with her supper work, 'that you could put almost anything into a pie, the fuss you make about apple and punkin — and mince.'

'Well,' his voice dropped to a less heated tone as he pushed a chair against the wall with his foot, turned, and paced the floor, his hands thrust severely into his overalls pockets, 'you *can* make a pie out of a lot of things, and you can't make a shortcake out of *anything* but strawberries.'

'Oh, shaw! You can too!' My mother shut the pantry door with conviction, and poured hot water over the dishes from the teakettle. 'I've made shortcake out of raspberries myself, and you've eaten it.'

'Yes, and you know what I thought about it, too. And anyway, them women won't get no strawberries out of me unless they put 'em into shortcake, way they ought to.'

'Mebbe they would n't make *good* shortcakes if they did.'

'Can't you make 'em yourself?'

'I can, but I won't,' stated my mother firmly. 'Not and give the berries too.'

'I'd give the berries and welcome,' offered my father wistfully, 'if you'd make the shortcakes.'

'I'll make you all the shortcakes you want,' she promised him faithfully, 'till strawberries is over — but you'll have to stand what you get to this Festival or stay to home.'

He did not threaten to stay at home, having weakened after making such a threat once in the case of a church supper, and again at a Sunday School picnic; but the uncertainty of what he might do resulted, by some diplomatic manœuvre on the part of my mother, in getting the *pièce de résistance* of the menu changed from pie to shortcake. He merely grumbled.

III

All, then, went well to the festive day. The church lawn was mowed, its edges trimmed with sickle and shears. Rows of lanterns swung gayly

from one post to another. Tables, improvised from planks and 'horses,' were set up and clothed. Bouquets of red and white clover ornamented the centre line. My father picked the berries — cream of the crop — in the coolness of early morning and put them in the cellar. He gloated over them as he bore great basins of them through the kitchen.

'Berries like them,' he boasted to my mother, holding a pan of huge crimson fragrant fruit under her nose, 'ought to buy a tarnation good hymn-book.' He chuckled. 'Ought to have something in it about bringin' in the berries,' 'stead of sheaves.'

The Festival was to be held at six o'clock; and on a June day, in the height of strawberry season, at six o'clock the sun is still lambent, though the shadows lie long upon the grass.

Now a Strawberry Festival in those days, which seem not so long ago in spite of the fifty-odd years that lie between, was, in Southern Michigan at least, an event of sufficient social importance to warrant new summer dresses, and perhaps a new straw hat. Men came in early from the fields and shaved. Some of the young men even stripped and bathed, though it was only the middle of the week — especially those who were going to take a girl. A visit to the barber on the Saturday night previous had resulted in hair cut and pomaded. Buggies had been washed, harness oiled and shined, horses curried and brushed.

Since we were to bring the berries with us, to be applied to the hot shortcake at the last moment, we went a bit early, my father demurring but little to the waste of time and what to him seemed a foolish custom of eating out of doors.

'Worst time in the whole year to eat outdoors,' he grumbled. 'Gnats and skeeters —'

'Too early for skeeters,' my mother

encouraged him, as she brushed his alpaca coat and worn breeches, 'and it's too high for gnats. Gnats stay on low land. Now for heaven's sake don't forget the berries. The ones for the shortcakes is in a stone crock and the others in a basket with grape leaves over 'em.' For it had been decided that not only should there be shortcake, but strawberries and cream to follow.

'Foolishest thing I ever heard of,' declared my father truculently, 'spoilin' two o' the best dishes in the world, crowdin' 'em.' But nevertheless he had scoured his vines to find the largest, ripest, finest berries for the latter dish, exulting in their fragrance and beauty.

He went to get the horse and buggy, I with him, while my mother took a last look around the house.

We arrived upon a gay and festive scene. Men dawdled upon and around the steps of the church. Boys and girls walked in the graveyard, white dresses catching on the thorny fingers of pale green eglantine that grew by the gate, clumsy, tender hands releasing. Women gathered about the table. Everybody, it would seem, was there, except the Covells. 'Land's sakes!' commented my mother as we drove up. 'What's happened to the Covells? They're gen'r'ly the first!'

Mis' Simpson, living nearest the church, had volunteered to make the shortcakes and arrived at the same moment as we did.

'You bring along the berries, 'Lije,' commanded my mother, hurrying off to the table. 'Take Delly with you.'

So my father and I drove to the hitching rack and left the horse. Then, with the gray stone jar held carefully in one arm, the basket of whole berries in the other, he led the way back through smiling, welcoming groups to the improvised worktable where my mother was impatiently waiting.

Mis' Simpson was removing the towels from the shortcakes, Mis' Boul-

dry was lavishly spreading the steaming halves with butter. My mother grabbed the heavy stone jar from my father's hands, set it on the table, and snatched off the cover. Her head and neck gave a convulsive jerk as she leaned over the crock. She bent farther over, the better to peer. A look of utter dismay overspread her face. She leaned heavily with her hands upon the table, and slowly lifted a pallid, horrified face to my father. The people around her were frozen with apprehension. My father stared at her.

'Lard!' she whispered. 'Lard! You got the wrong crock!' My father took a step forward and glared unbelievably into the jar.

'I got it where you told me,' he said nervously, 'on the cellar shelf.'

My mother threw both hands to her head, knocking the hat that sat precariously on her mop of black hair to a rakish angle.

'Oh, Lord!' she breathed, not un-piously. 'I brought 'em up to sweeten up and forgot.'

My father fell back, shocked and silent. No word was spoken. Alarm and consternation had spread from group to group. Without their knowing the depth of catastrophe, its shadow had fallen. Nothing, it seemed, could redeem the situation.

Our house, our kitchen, and the jar of berries in it, were two miles away. The shortcakes were cooling; the butter, in spite of the slanting rays of a June sun, was stiffening. The berries, the crimson luscious berries with their sweet juice, were far away. Sheridan with his mere twenty miles and a good fast horse to cover the distance was as a wraith of mist before the wind compared to these two miles and a spoiling crust.

Then Mis' Bouldry came to life. 'Well, my land!' she exclaimed confidently. 'It ain't as if we did n't have berries. We'll just use these.' She was

stripping the leaves from the basket, to my father's indignant dismay, when, with a clatter of hoofs and a rattle of loosened spokes, the Covells hove into view.

The Covells were our next neighbors on the east, a thriftless crew composed of a shiftless father and a slatternly mother with four children, all girls; always borrowing, never returning; certain to be counted on where food was plentiful and good, regardless of cost. They were too poor to buy the children decent clothes, but never too poor to pay for a church supper. Never before had they been known to be late, and on the way over my father had made some caustic speculation as to whether the Covells would already be seated at the tables, tongues a-droolin'.

But here they came, Ol' Covell 'g'langing' at the lean team that drew them, the girls flopping and banging about on the two improvised board seats across the box of the wagon, Mrs. Covell waving one hand violently in the air and hanging for dear life with the other—to a stone crock in her lap!

Every eye was lifted to their approach. My father stood open-mouthed, his old sweat-stained straw hat pushed back on his bald head. My mother, pale and stricken, seemed hardly to sense the agitation.

'Hey!' shouted Mis' Covell as the team drew up with a lurching flourish. 'Lookit! We got the berries!'

My mother gasped. My father lunged forward, strode, grabbed the jar from Mis' Covell's astonished hands, and plunked it down on the table.

'There!' he said, with the air of a man who has accomplished miracles, but not unwittingly.

It appeared, when anyone was sufficiently recovered from shock to listen, that Mis' Covell had been asked to contribute sugar to the Festival

(as a preventive measure against having to eat any of her cooking), and finding herself short, — a customary condition of her larder, — had stopped to borrow of my mother.

Opening the unlocked door, she had helped herself to the sugar, and then, led by her nose, had found the stone jar of fragrant fruit. Suspecting the situation, she had snatched up the crock and egged her astonished spouse — accustomed to moderation in all personal activity — to speed, and here they were.

My mother bent happily to the belated inundation of flaky crust with crimson berries; my father swaggered a little from group to group, showing his basket of tempting fruit.

‘Best crop I ever had,’ he said. ‘Why, *five* of them berries’ll fill a cup.’ No one thought to question the size of the cup.

Mis’ Lou Esty’s voice clarioned. Long pantalooned legs slid over the rude benches at the side of the table. Modestly garmented ankles slipped in beside them. Hats were recklessly flung upon the grass. The Committee ‘waited.’ Young men properly attended their ladies, as did older men — when they remembered.

IV

The menu was simple, but plenteous, since this was a supper rather than the usual Festival fare of berries, ice cream, and cake. It consisted of a dish announced by Mis’ Esty as Chicken Cheese — another urban innovation the rule for which she had brought back with her from the Edwardses’ — and instantly denounced by my father when she had discussed it with my mother at the outset of plans.

‘Why in *tunket* they want to chonk up their chicken beforehand?’ he wanted to know. ‘Cold fried chicken’s good enough for *anybody*.’

‘We *always* have fried chicken,’ declared my mother in defense of Mis’ Esty’s argument. ‘Seems good to have a change.’

My father snorted. ‘*Changel*’ he barked. ‘What’s the sense in changing anything that’s good the way it is?’

In this, however, probably because she had stood in favor of shortcake as against pie, my mother arrayed herself with Mis’ Esty and her ‘Chicken Cheese.’

It was a tasty dish, as I recall it, and the rule which I find in one of my old cookbooks sounds not unappetizing, although by and large I agree with my father as to the merits of fried chicken on, as you might say, the hoof.

To make Chicken Cheese you ‘take a chicken and cook it very tender. Cook the gravy or liquor of the chicken down to a jell. Take out all the bones and chop the meat; season with salt, pepper, and a little sage. Put it then into a mould and pour the liquor over it. When cold, take out and slice.’

My own translation of this recipe as rendered in later days calls for one small onion finely chopped and a seasoning of celery salt in addition. I also use a tablespoon of dissolved gelatin to a pint of the strong liquor to pour over the meat. And I garnish it with hard boiled egg sliced, radish roses, and parsley. It differs from the original recipe only in being more highly seasoned and dressed up a little.

There were scalloped potatoes, hot and smoking, the top of each tin basin encrusted with an amber film shading to brown and bisque, oozing, at a touch, a creamy liquid rich with the salty zest of butter.

There were riz’ biscuits, differing pleasantly from the baking-powder consistency of the shortcakes, and there was a huge bowl of young lettuce leaves dressed with mild vinegar, sugar, and salt, and served on saucers. There were tart cucumber pickles and dill

pickles, but the generous impulse of some to contribute preserves and other sweets had been restrained. 'You don't want sweet things,' my mother had told them, 'just before you eat shortcake. Spoil the taste of it if you do.'

And the shortcake! With all due allowance made for the lapse of time between the uncovering of Mis' Simpson's cakes and the arrival of the berries for their rosy thatch, there could not have been much wrong, it seems to me, with that shortcake, judging by the manner in which it disappeared. And yet, on our way home, my father acidly remarked that so far as he was concerned 'they might just as well have kept their shortcake to home. The *berries* was all right, but it was a pity to waste 'em on a shortcake like that.'

'Why, 'Lije,' differed my mother, 'that was good shortcake; it was n't made with sour milk the way I do, that's all.'

'Well,' he grumbled as we jogged homeward, 'we'll have to wait couple days now 'fore we can have *any* shortcake.' Then he chuckled rumblingly into his stubby beard. 'Had n't been for them danged snoopin' Covells,' he muttered, 'we might a had *plenty* shortcake to-morrow.'

V

For the rule by which my mother made her sour-milk shortcake — or one similar to it — I have had to search through such old 'receipt books' as are treasured by the daughters of her contemporaries, since she left no record of her own. What I have found contains all the ingredients, and in proper proportions, as nearly as we can judge. Of course I am giving you modern, level measurements where the old books call for 'heaping' teaspoonfuls and 'cups' of this and that, heaven only knowing what size the cups were.

But here it is, according to our translation, and you must do the best you can with it. For by what necromancy my mother welded these ingredients together I do not know, but try as I may I cannot persuade my palate that a shortcake made to-day, using exactly the same component parts, tastes *quite* as did those so inextricably mingled in memory with the rare, sweet Junes of my childhood's memory. Perhaps it was the berries — my father was a master hand at raising berries. None nowadays taste nearly so sweet or have such *strawberry* flavor. Perhaps it was the butter. There *is* no such butter now as that which enriched — both outside and in — my mother's shortcake. Perhaps it was because my father said it was good — for when my father said a thing was good you could take his word for it. It *was* good. And — perhaps it was because my mother made it!

At any rate, here are the things she put in it, and, so far as I can tell, the way she put them together (according to this old dog-eared book lent me by the daughter of the first owner, who cooked by practically the same rules). And I can only hope that you will have the skill (or luck) to bring forth something that will give you half the epicurean pleasure that my mother's shortcakes gave us.

To two cups of flour take one teaspoonful of baking soda, one teaspoonful of salt, four tablespoonfuls of shortening (half butter), and about a cup and a half of sour milk, 'lobbered.' Sift the flour, salt, and soda together into a bowl, and work in the shortening. Then pour in the milk, stirring the flour into it from the sides with a wooden spoon. The dough should be just as soft as it can be handled, so the amount of milk is indefinite. Pour it out on to a floured board and then pat it out or roll it gently — handling it just as little as possible — to a cake about

three quarters of an inch thick. Put this into a buttered baking tin either square or oblong and bake it in a hot oven (450 degrees) for fifteen minutes.

The amount of soda depends somewhat on the sourness of the milk. Do not try to sour pasteurized milk, for it cannot be done. It will get 'old' but it will not 'lobber.' And if you don't know what 'lobbered' means, it means thick — the dictionary stylishly calls it 'clabbered.' If you use too much soda, the cake will be yellow and taste like lye. Of course you may be safer in making a baking-powder dough, in which case you take your regular recipe for biscuits but add another tablespoon of shortening (using half butter, at least, for the shortening) and bake it the same way.

When your cake is done (and 'shortcake' in my kind of recipe does n't mean 'biscuits'), proceed after this fashion: have your strawberries (dead ripe) washed, hulled, mashed, and sweetened, in a bowl (my mother used

a blue bowl and I am reasonably sure it was Staffordshire, but it was not prized and she used it because the berries looked so pretty in it). And be sure there are plenty of them.

Turn your hot cake out on a platter and split it in two, laying the top half aside while you give your undivided attention to the lower. Spread this most generously with butter just softened enough (but never melted) to spread nicely, and be sure to lay it on clear up to the very eaves. Now slosh your berries on, spoonful after spoonful — all it will take. Over this put the top layer, and give it the same treatment, butter and berries, and let them drool off the edges — a rich, red, luscious, slowly oozing cascade of ambrosia. On the top place a few whole berries — if you want to — and get it to the table as quickly as you can. It should be eaten just off the warm, and if anybody wants to deluge it with cream, let him do so. But the *memory* of a strawberry shortcake like this lies with the cake and not with cream.

KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING

BY HERBERT DINGLE

I

THE time in which we are living is unique in the history of the world. Of course, in some sense or other all times are unique, but the peculiar property of the present age, which makes it stand out from all others in the contemplation of philosophically-minded persons, is that for the first time the bulk of the population of civilized countries consists of educated people. I do not deny that the education is often little more than embryonic, but the characteristic of an embryo is that it grows. I do not deny that modern education often takes the form of the little learning proverbially damned as dangerous, but for that very reason, if for no other, it is a fact to be faced with the utmost seriousness.

The man in the street — at least in democratic countries like America and England — is no longer a part of the 'hard-headed British (or American) working classes' at election times, and a numskull obviously incapable of forming wise judgments when the election is over: he belongs to a body of men and women who listen with pleasure and eager anticipation to protracted series of radio talks on subjects demanding careful thought — men and women who are no longer channels through which knowledge flows, or even receptacles in which it is stored, but intelligent agents, capable of grinding it down and transmuting it into wisdom. In order to sell one's books it

may still be necessary to appeal chiefly to the emotions, but it is no longer the lowest form of emotionalism that responds, and the bait may be the subtlest of recent thought instead of romantic love-fiction; it is the marriage of geometry and mechanics rather than that of the beggar-maid and the prince that draws the cheering crowd. More than ever before we find a desire to know what the best minds are thinking, and a capacity to form independent judgment when the knowledge is obtained. And the irony of the situation is that no sooner does this state of things come into existence than knowledge of all kinds begins to assume the cloak of absurdity.

If there is one word that more aptly than another describes modern intellectual activity in its widest generality, that word is 'unintelligibility.' In physics the name of relativity is notorious: if one claims to understand it he is looked at askance, and his subsequent statements are regarded with suspicion. Yet even relativity shrinks before the spectre of the quantum theory, in which a particle and a wave are the same thing and we are at last, as one physicist put it, 'firmly grounded on the principle of uncertainty.' Men shake their heads and turn, perhaps, to logic — the subject which, as I learned in my youth, had not changed since the time of Aristotle and could elicit an instinctive appreciation from every

rational human being. But what has happened here? The unchangeable has at last changed, and the new logic, having donned the mantle of philosophy, is in full retreat before physics into the realm of the incomprehensible, as though it feared usurpation of the crown which philosophy has always seemed to regard as its prerogative. One of the leaders of modern logical thought, Mr. Wittgenstein, who has given rise (involuntarily, it seems) to what is perhaps the most vigorous of modern philosophical schools, — that of logical positivism, — concludes his fundamental treatise on the essence of the rational with these words: 'My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands them finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them.' Or, as Mr. Bertrand Russell expresses it in his explanatory preface, 'the things that have to be said in leading the reader to understand Mr. Wittgenstein's theory are all of them things which that theory itself condemns as meaningless.'

Literature, then: surely here is something communicable! 'My first counsel,' says Mr. Harold Nicolson, the well-known English critic, in a defense of present-day literature, 'to those who wish to approach modern writing is, from the outset, to divest themselves of all preconceived notions of clarity or comprehension . . . the modern reader should be prepared for gaps in communication, and should accept as incomprehensible those allusions on the part of the author which he may not be even expected to understand.' This is frank enough; but perhaps he has gone too far. Mr. James Joyce seems to be more accommodating; he gives us hope, though it may be of the deferred quality. 'The demand that I make of my reader,' he told Mr. Max Eastman in an interview, 'is that he should devote his whole life to reading my

works'; and it is only afterward that we realize that he has not promised understanding, even then.

We turn to art. Here is Mr. Harold Nicolson again, saying temperately what some have urged with impassioned emphasis: 'Few modern pictures can, or wish to, answer the question: "What is that meant to be?"' The modern artist tries merely to convey the effect produced upon his own sensibilities by certain combinations of light and shade, by certain adjustments of volume or color. He is not concerned with rendering these effects intelligible to the public, still less is he concerned with telling the public a story which they will recognize and understand.'

Music is in similar, though not quite identical, case. In the past it has not claimed to appeal greatly to the intelligence, aiming rather at the emotions. To-day it seems to be accounting for its practice of exciting the least pleasing emotions by producing theories of which we were not previously aware of the need.

Religion, of course, remains as a solace to many, but only so long as it remains true to itself. Long ago it offered a peace which passeth all understanding, not because it was difficult to understand, but because understanding was irrelevant. To-day the interpretations (equally futile, as it seems to me) range from the thirteenth-century system of Saint Thomas Aquinas — which is not only difficult in itself but is inherently inadequate on account of its inexpressibility in terms of modern thought — to the discovery that, after all, religion is simply mathematics, which no ordinary person can be expected to understand. One eminent English bishop, it is true, does offer the ordinary man a treatise of theorems in non-Euclidean geometry as a contribution to the solution of religious difficulties, and confesses — as though with his wisdom he had lost

understanding — that a metaphor which any nineteenth-century churchgoer would have understood perfectly is beyond him.

Look where you will, you find the newly awakened mind no sooner conscious that it is in a world of realities than it becomes conscious also that those realities are beyond its apprehension. It has simply exchanged one dream world for another.

II

Now it is of the first importance to notice that in all these departments of thought we are dealing, not with difficulties which stimulate, but with impossibilities which crush. The new ideas are not merely hard to understand; they are intrinsically beyond the reach of understanding — or, at the best, beyond the reach of understanding without a long and arduous course of special training which only few can undertake.

Furthermore, the doctrines which are preached by the favored few who have more than normal powers are not such as, to the ordinary man, seem reasonable. If they were, he might profitably take the reasoning on trust, and try to think out the full effect of the conclusions on his public and private life. But when the conclusions themselves seem absurd, and he is incapable of checking them, what then? When the witnesses speak in unknown tongues and the judge seems mad, what is the poor jury to do?

When you are told that the mass of the sun is $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres; that when you say 'red is a color' you are talking nonsense; that the introduction of punctuation marks in the midst of a single word is admirable because it serves to mark 'the acceleration and hesitation of the rapid, capricious, and melodic line'; that we have too little to eat because we have too much; and

that if you try to understand these things you must be endowed with special gifts and spend a lifetime in developing them — how are you going to execute, in calmness and confidence, those simple tasks of controlling the destinies of present and future generations, in your own and other countries of the world, which a democratic constitution has laid upon you?

It will be becoming clear, I hope, that a few hours spent in considering the philosophy underlying modern intellectual movements is not necessarily idle trifling.

But I am going to claim more than this. It seems to me that this problem is the one which, above all others, needs consideration at the present time, because if you have once understood what it is that any group of thinkers is actually doing, you have taken the first and greatest step toward a true appreciation of their thoughts themselves. We must discover what our leaders of thought are doing in thus suddenly and unannouncedly leading us into this bog of nescience. Not, be it observed, *why* they are doing it; that, important as it is, is a task for the historian or the psychologist, according to the meaning you attach to the word 'why.' *What* they are doing is a far more important question. The fish (*pace* the behaviorists) knows very well why it goes to the fly; if it knew what its action was, it would be a wiser and less sad fish.

Now although, in the last resort, all intellectual inquiries have an infinite scope, I think science makes a special demand on our attention at this time. To say that it is the most important inquiry would be to lay oneself open to the suspicion of exalting his own particular interest in a spirit of partisanship. I think, however, that after all allowance has been made for this it remains true that science offers the most promising inroad into the fundamental philosophy of life to which all

intellectual interests must lead if they are followed to their source. In the first place, science is the most uniformly successful of human endeavors. In rapidity of progress, it leaves all its rivals far behind. Compared with traditional philosophy, art criticism, theology, and the rest, it has but negligible internal dissensions; scientists put their brains together instead of setting them against one another. It is also more closely wedded to the ordinary affairs of life than any other mental activity — so much so, indeed, that it is quite the fashion among the ignorant to think of science in terms of practical application instead of intellectual adventure, and, only too often, to forget the benefits of such application in condemning the evils: poison gas fills the front of the stage while X-rays recede to the background.

The essentially virile character of science as compared with traditional philosophy is strikingly shown by a recent example. For generations philosophers have discussed, in connection with the problem of idealism versus realism, the proposition that things cannot be known as they are because the act of knowing inevitably modifies them; the phenomenon cannot be identical with the noumenon. In spite of all discussion, however, there remain idealists and realists in very much the same relative strength as ever. Science has ignored this question completely until it has, in its own natural course, come up against the difficulty that it cannot increase the accuracy of measurement of one characteristic of a system without decreasing the accuracy of measurement of another. And what has happened? There has been next to no 'discussion.' The impossibility of knowing a system completely as it is, in the current physical terms, has been accepted, and, instead of spending idle controversy on which characteristic it is better to know, the fact of incom-

patibility has itself been used as a principle by means of which further advances have been made.

I cite this instance not in invidious comparison. Doubtless philosophers can explain why their problems must necessarily be more debatable than those of scientists; but the fact remains that science surmounts its stumbling-blocks and turns them to account, while philosophy makes an apparently indefinitely protracted halt, and that fact alone affords a strong reason for choosing science as the most suitable particular through which to seek the common origin of general systematic thought.

III

Now, while all this is true, there is a more immediate and topical reason why the meaning of science demands special inquiry at this moment. I have spoken of the general unintelligibility of modern thought, and hinted at its dangers. Science shares this unintelligibility with the other kinds of thought, but its situation is peculiar mainly because the public interest in science is probably as great as that in all other subjects put together. Its immediate relation to everyday experience and the dramatic character of its recent exploits are doubtless largely responsible for this — but again, causes do not concern us; it is the fact that matters.

The most prominent example is provided by psychology. Every third-rate novelist or playwright is a first-rate psychoanalyst; and where Shakespeare could only leave his audience to surmise why Macbeth could not pronounce 'Amen' when he had most need of it, his successor of to-day airily creates a character who not only relieves our anxieties with talk of 'repressions' and 'libidos' and 'conflicts' and 'conations' and the rest, but is only too obviously on the spot in anticipation of that very task. It is not

merely psychology without tears, it is psychology with shouts of joy; and no one would be so cruel as to ask if it is true psychology, for that would mar the unity of the plot. The only test which could afford any positive knowledge on this point — namely, an inquiry into the degree to which these amateur psychologists have, on the average, surpassed simple, uninitiated folk in composing their married lives — would not, so far as my limited observation goes, yield a result greatly in their favor. But the public does not inquire into that. The jargon is displayed with such an air of authority that its significance and authenticity are taken for granted, and instead of the original mysteriousness and inherent difficulty of psychology we have an illusion of simplicity and mechanical application of rules which is even worse than realized inapprehension.

In physics the situation is in some respects the same, and in others precisely the opposite. Here there is no need to work relativity and the quantum theory into the texture of fiction: modern physics itself takes the place of fiction — if, indeed, it is not itself sometimes fiction in disguise. In this subject, more than in any other, the cry for interpretation has met with a response from men peculiarly gifted in exposition, and the rough places have been made so plain that it is scarcely possible to tread them without slipping. The result, as we all know, is that books of physical theory and speculation rank among 'best sellers' — a class of literature formerly occupied exclusively by novels and entered, apparently, on conditions unrelated to their merit.

Superficially, this is not a thing to be deplored, and certainly no one would question the ability of some of the authors, or their competence for the work they have undertaken. But to what does it all lead? The enigmas of modern physics are in no measure

explained; they are simply dispelled. The reader is not enlightened; he is drugged. Paradox, instead of being a challenge to thought, becomes a delight to the ear, and whenever the reader feels a question arising in his mind there is always a comfortable assurance ready to preserve him from the dangers of thinking out the answer.

'But what,' he may ask, 'is this electron which you say is both a particle and a wave?' 'Ah, you need n't trouble about that,' is the reply; 'we don't know ourselves: the electron is something unknown doing we don't know what.' 'But what, then, have you discovered? Why do you speak so contemptuously of the old science, which we understood in some measure, and say it is superseded by a great new revelation?' 'Because we have found that, at bottom, everything is mathematics.' 'What, then, is mathematics?' 'Why, my dear fellow, mathematics is the one sole characteristic of the Creator: would you presume to understand that? If you knew mathematics you would know everything; a mathematical formula, and nothing else, expresses the ultimate reality. You yourself are simply a mathematical formula — a mathematical thought in the mind of a perfect Mathematician. Is not that sufficient justification for contempt of a mere system of screws and flywheels which the last century talked about?' 'Well, yes, I suppose; but I don't see how you have found out that everything is mathematics.' 'Why, by mathematics, of course; how else, since mathematics is everything? The system of physics is a closed system.'

And so, you see, the reader's difficulties are deflected one by one until at last he either concludes that he has no brain for that kind of thing, which no doubt would be clear enough if he were not so dull, or else is so delighted that somebody appears to understand it that he forgets all about his own diffi-

culties in admiration of the wonders which science can perform.

This is no travesty. It describes, in fact, a process which I have repeatedly observed to be going on in the minds of men endowed with good intellects and blessed formerly with a healthy desire to understand what was happening in the scientific world. Here are a few published examples. 'We are profoundly ignorant,' writes Sir Herbert Samuel, in an address on 'Philosophy and the Ordinary Man,' with regard to the ultimate stuff of the physical universe. . . . If an event is merely something happening to nothing, that does not carry us much further. . . . When we come to the theory offered by relativity we are no better off. For my own part I shall refuse to admit without a struggle that I am nothing more than a pattern of folds or stresses in the space-time continuum. . . . There we stand, then, with regard to these great matters, awaiting with what patience we may fresh discoveries by the pioneers of thought that may open to us territories . . . which we cannot yet enter.'

Here is one, then, admittedly struggling rather hopelessly against conclusions forced on him against his reason, and, instead of trusting his reason to declare them false, faintly trusting the larger hope that his adversaries, when they have conquered him, will lodge him in a comfortable internment camp.

Now let us hear one who has yielded and is being marched off in custody. 'The mathematicians are among the most trustworthy of intellectual guides,' writes a doctor of science, L. M. Parsons, in *The Universe of Our Experience*. 'Eventually we may have to trust the mathematician alone.' And after consulting the mathematician he goes on to say that 'science leaves us free to give such interpretation of the mysterious background of phenomena

as we may wish.' Captivity looks not so bad, then: we can really trust our masters to look after us. And here finally is the proof, from one safely imprisoned. It is far better even than we dared to hope. We are not merely lodged in comfort; we are hypnotized so that we believe we are free. In the Introduction to the reprint, in the well-known 'Everyman's Library,' of Sir Arthur Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World*, we read the following: 'This book is of testamentary importance in the recent emancipation of thought from the shackles of classical science.' Emancipation for what? The next page tells us. 'We pay our money, two shillings in this case, and Eddington, the magician, does the rest.' In other words, to think is to be shackled; freedom is to pay others to think for you.

I wish these quotations could be regarded as the usual extravagances which accompany a forward movement, but it is only too clear that they cannot. We are faced with a very definite situation — an intellectual atmosphere in which breathing is impossible because some constituents flatly refuse to enter the lungs, while others, entering only too easily, turn out to be anæsthetics. Mr. Joyce demands the reader's whole life; Sir Arthur Eddington demands half a dollar. And what the reader wants more than ever before, and more than ever before is capable of receiving, is guidance in his own thinking. He can live his own life if Mr. Joyce will tell him, in language which he can understand, whatever will help him in that task. He can think for himself if Sir Arthur will tell him, not what it is impossible to do and know, or what science no longer believes, but in what scientific thought can assist his own thinking. It is just this lack of a medium for the ordinary man, between an impossible effort and no effort at all, between the fate of Sisyphus and the

ministrations of Procrustes, that makes it so important to-day to examine the essential character of science itself rather than the particular aspect which it presents at the moment.

IV

I must here digress briefly to say, as emphatically as I can, that no personal considerations of any kind intrude into this article. In speaking as I have done of the great popularizers of physics, I impute no culpable error, still less any unworthy motive. Further, I am not in the least unconscious of the enormous benefits which I, as well as innumerable others, have derived from their books. But I am concerned solely with the results of their actions, not at all with the causes; and while, for reasons already indicated, I believe those results to be in many important points extremely unfortunate, nothing is further from my intention than to blame the authors. It is easy to be wise after the event; it is almost impossible to be wise enough before; and I freely admit that the only reason why I did not myself write the purely expository parts of *The Nature of the Physical World*, for example, was lack of the necessary knowledge and ability.

My chief aspiration is to be clear; it seems to me less harmful to be clearly wrong than doubtfully right. I accordingly allow no false delicacy of feeling to temper the definiteness of any statement, trusting to this explanation and my happy acquaintanceship with the authors concerned, amounting in some cases to friendship, to prevent misunderstanding. I find no difficulty whatever in mingling the greatest affection and admiration for a man, on both the intellectual and the moral planes, with dislike of his ideas. This, I think, is as it should be, and I ask no different treatment for myself and my ideas. If we cannot maintain this distinction we

may as well give up science and take to politics.

Resuming our theme, then, let us ask what sort of behavior we may expect from a people looking for knowledge and desiring to think clearly, when it is on one side faced by complete blankness and on the other charmed by the unexpected delight of being able, with a good conscience, to leave its thinking to others. I am speaking of people in democratic countries, on whose clear thinking ultimately depends the future of their own civilization and that of others. The question is not pleasant. That the state of the public mind does, in fact, oscillate between the above extremes is not difficult to verify; in England, at least, it is only too clearly shown. There is a complete and quite unconscious incompatibility between the attitudes of the ordinary man toward problems which, if they need a different approach at all, need it in just the opposite way to that which we find to be the fact. In matters which he has once learned to call 'science' his respect for knowledge is abject; the most obvious nonsense is welcomed with joy and wonder if it is only called 'mathematics' or 'quantum theory.' On the other hand, in matters of infinitely more difficulty which are not technically 'science,' the opinions of experts with first-hand knowledge are deemed absurd, or even criminal, if they conflict with the emanations of his own ignorance.

He knows exactly how the people of India should be governed, but he calls in a plumber to put a new washer on the kitchen tap. He knows very well whether the *Codex Sinaiticus* is a forgery or not, but when his electric light fails only the electrician can deal with the blown fuse. He has been writing to *The Times*, explaining in detailed psychoanalytic terms how we came to expose a portion of our pocket handkerchiefs, but he believes that time and

space are identical if only 'science' tells him so. He has strong convictions on the employment of men, but he accepts in respectful admiration the scientist's instructions on how to employ a microscope. He can read statesmen's motives with precision and certainty, but he dare not read an ammeter.

In such a situation, what is to be done? Surely it is to restore — or, if you like, create — in the public mind the proper degree of confidence in its own judgment, the sense that the problems of government by which it is faced, though extremely difficult and incapable of immediate final solution, are best approached by the free exercise of ordinary human reason, sharpened and nourished on facts by the best minds which our age has produced. The blind acceptance of authority, as well as the supreme assurance of ignorance, must yield to the active operation of a reason conscious equally of its sovereign powers and of their proper limitations. There is no state of mind more easily exploited by the clever demagogue, charlatan though he may be, than that which exists among us at this moment. And the only way that I can see of displacing that state of mind by a rational one is by showing that the achievements of modern thought — in physics in particular — have come not by the magic of a rare and special faculty, but by the exercise of just those very powers of reason which every normal man possesses in some degree, on facts observed by the ordinary human senses.

Such exercise is not easy, but it is normal. The non-specialist cannot hope to understand all the details by which the results have been reached, but he is capable of understanding quite well what those results are, and can judge for himself in what manner and to what degree they bear on his life as a whole. A nation of men and women with free, disciplined minds is a

dream, and I am under no illusion that we are going to realize it in the twinkling of an eye, but I hope readers will agree that it is a dream worth realizing.

V

But, if all this is granted, who is to undertake the work of interpreting the intellectual characteristics of the present age in terms generally significant? The answer, I think, is — anyone who can do it. The requirements in the particular field before us now are a considerable knowledge of physics and philosophy, and extreme simplicity and breadth of mind; and it is the last which is most essential and, in the present sophisticated state of thought, most difficult to cultivate. It is fairly obvious that no one man is sufficiently endowed to perform the task once for all. The situation demands contributions from all who have with knowledge meditated on the problem sufficiently to have acquired a consistent, rational outlook.

Two things, however, should be said. A man's actual achievements in solving detailed problems in physics or philosophy are (except for the limited extent to which they imply understanding of the fundamental principles of the subjects themselves) rather a disqualification than otherwise for our purpose, for they tend to give his mind a bias in the direction of his own special research: it is knowledge, not achievement, that is necessary. We do not go to the holder of racing records to solve the traffic problem for us, and although the idea has been held — and is still held in some quarters — that eminence in science is a guarantee that a man will be a successful member of Parliament, the evidence is strongly against the idea. It would be absurd, of course, to go to the other extreme, and hold a man to be disqualified for taking a broad view because he has achieved success where

a narrow one was needed. The mind's eye, like the body's, has a large range of accommodation, and there are outstanding examples in America, as well as in England, proving it is sometimes freely used. But it nevertheless remains true that achievement in a subject is a hindrance rather than a help in estimating the true relation of that subject to others. It is the man who, in perpetual detachment, keeps an eternal vigilance on the whole field of his inquiry that sees the content of that field in the best perspective.

The other point is that, since the present situation in philosophical physics is so extremely intricate, the ideally detached man is, humanly speaking, an impossibility. We cannot withdraw far enough from the scene to hold philosophy and physics in equal scrutiny without losing essential details, and it follows that he who would attempt to solve our problem must be in some measure either a philosopher or a physicist. To say that the physicist is the more favorably situated is not to take sides in a quarrel which has no justification for existing. It does not mean that physics is in any sense a more proper study than philosophy: such an idea belongs to the same class of absurdities as the illusions that one's own country or university or football team is automatically superior to any other.

Physics is not one iota nobler or baser than philosophy, but at the present time the physicist has a better chance of obtaining a sufficient knowledge of philosophy than the philosopher has of obtaining a sufficient knowledge of physics, for the same reason that a seaman acquires land legs more quickly than a landsman acquires sea legs. Modern physics, is, indeed, not unlike a ship, drawing nearer to a goal not yet in sight, but so tossed about by the buffetings of experiment and working hypothesis that the passenger scarcely knows whether he is progressing or drifting. Philosophy, by comparison, is the steady rock on which the lighthouse stands.

The metaphor will bear extension. The slight movement of an earthquake shock destroys the lighthouse, and a new one is built over its wreck; while the far greater displacements of the physical ship in a storm have little influence on its forward course. But that is by the way; the main point is that the physicist can more easily obtain sufficient philosophical knowledge than the philosopher can acquire sufficient physical knowledge.

It is beyond the scope of an article such as this to attempt to solve the problems raised: all that it is possible to do is to direct attention to them. We stand in a perilous position; to realize the peril is the first necessity.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

A ROSE BY SEVERAL OTHER NAMES WOULD SMELL SWEETER

I HAD a name before I had a dog to go by it. The name was Joli-Cœur (I was thirteen), Jolly for short. Then at the kennels the dog that chose me had three-cornered tan eyebrows that gave her a look of perpetual dismay. Jolly would n't do, so I decided on Pixy, which soon grew too small for her.

For many years she remained Pixy, however, except to visitors, to whom she was always Trixie. In the family she was also known by various logical derivations such as Puff, Bump, Silly One, Pax, and Pig.

It was only a few months ago that we had our idea, and I hate to say it was due to any lack in Pixy's charms. But you know how it is: a dog of ten is scarcely a puppy. Gone are her infant capers, gone her entertaining instability. Nowadays you could set your watch by her. She rises at seven and begins to pound the cellar door, which she has reduced to about half its original thickness. She stands underfoot in the kitchen till given her breakfast, which she sniffs at disdainfully; then trots, businesslike, off to bed. She stays in bed until nine and then comes to be taken out. She follows the sunshine through the house until dinnertime, sniffs disdainfully at her dinner, eats her breakfast, and then settles in the middle of the living room to be ready if anyone suggests a ride or a walk. She's upset if her bedtime is postponed five minutes. During the night she eats her dinner.

This, day in and day out, until she became of no more emotional value than a foliage plant.

But one day I looked at her and the thought came into my mind: 'Louise.' She stared searchingly from her dish to me in her usual way; but she was no longer Pixy, she was Louise. I can't tell you the difference it made. The dull things she had done as Pixy were piquant in Louise. When Louise wove her head back and forth to sniff the steam rising from her dish of warmed-up

Pal, it was definitely amusing. When Louise sat down and scratched her ear with her hind leg, pulling a long smile on the opposite side of her face, life seemed delicious. When Louise had nightmares and growled in her sleep, twitching her upper lip and trembling her paws, I felt a warm fondness for her like nothing I had felt since she was a puppy and ate the cover of *The Mill on the Floss*, looking at me innocently out of the ruins.

The family was affected likewise, and it became the custom to name her in rotation: Grandma on Monday, Mother on Tuesday, Dad on Wednesday, Eleanor on Thursday, and begin again. Grandma chooses names of people she has known and towns she has lived in: Corning, Luverne, Hattie, and Grace. Mother is poetic and literary: Moonflower, Fantasy, Artful Dodger (Pixy steals handkerchiefs), Wackford Squeers. Father chooses feminine names like Patricia and Lucile, whereas I run to short, brisk, male names like Thomas, Charles, and George. Occasionally she suggests the names herself: to-day she is Hoover, because she picks up crumbs.

It is like living over her puppy days. And more: it is like living with a hundred puppies, one by one. One day she is subtle, as Pompadour; another frank and open, as Cheeryble; another intellectual, as Jeeves. And when I think of all the names there are still in the calendar, and look forward to the many days which Pixy (as we used to reflect resignedly, for she is in perfect health) has yet to live, my soul feels rich and blessed.

You may ask: How about her? One would think it might unsettle the temper, being a different creature every day. But it does n't work that way. I think Pixy was becoming lonely, lonelier than she knew, in her self-contained monotony. She asked no attention (beyond mere decent service), but I think she needed it. At any rate, she frisks almost puppy-like again when we joyously discover her as Theodora, Gift of God. And when we call 'Here, Blessing'

or 'Here, Quackenbush,' she understands instinctively that we mean her.

It has made me think about life, these new doors opening to us so unexpectedly. How would it be if, when domestic life grows heavy, a fresh set of names were bestowed all round? The husband you had grown to tolerate as Henry might develop into something rich and strange as, say, Jonathan. And the wife whose requirements irked when she was Mattie might seem adorable as Jennifer — or vice versa. The thing is subject to endless mutations. Perhaps it would even reconcile the stubborn polygamous instinct of mankind. The weary spouse of Arthur could renew her youth with Lancelot; the lad who married Mary might have Amaryllis yet.

I've never liked the word 'rose,' myself. Think of the glowing syllables one might use, curving, joined clearly, plunging at last into the mysterious heart! And this new flower would smell sweeter.

FINE WEATHER

THE Daibutsu casts a spell. It is quiet in his park. The tall pines frame his detachment. Even the pilgrims who, having bowed so devoutly, wander once about him and back to their buses for the next shrine cause him no embarrassment. And they carry off with them some fragment of his invincibility. Sit for a day in his park and it will be difficult to desire ever to do anything else. The cicadas hum in the pine trees. There is a pageant of pilgrims and tourists. If you stay late enough the full moon rises just where it can throw his silhouette clear and firm against the slanting pines.

Kamakura is more than the Daibutsu. She gave her name to an historical period; was the capital of the first Shogun (literally 'Barbarian Subduing Great General,' the ancient Japanese for the modern *Führer*); repulsed two invasions of Kublai Khan; witnessed the miracle by which a stroke of lightning smashed the sword descending to decapitate the priest Nichiren, who lived to father an energetic sect. Kamakura is a shrine for religious and historical treasures; a flourishing town; a popular summer resort; a fishing village. Kamakura has everything: temples with malicious gods, ancient

and modern; shrines with bronze lions of a good period, and primitive stone foxes; ponds of lotus, white, rose, and lemon, with bundles of bread hanging on wires at the pool's edge so that the pedestrian may pause and feed the fantailed goldfish which dart in exciting patterns among the lotus; pigeons dancing sedately before the grotesque gods of war at the Hachiman Shrine, while swarms of Japanese tourists in flowing kimonos and flowering parasols wander among them, scattering crumbs. There are woods studded with large white fragrant lilies and blue hydrangea. There are small paths that wander over pine-starred hills into gentle valleys where thatched cottages materialize from the rice paddies. There is the thriving Main Street where you may buy *aisu-cream* and shell animals, or catch one of the buses which scurry in all directions like disconcerted ants.

There is always some kind of festival in Kamakura: the streets hung with jagged white paper lightning; banners and lanterns; high bamboo pavilions housing orchestras of local youths who pound their flat drums and play their shrill flutes with intricate but infallibly rhythmic gyrations of arms and body.

The beach is Coney Island plus. By day in the height of the season it swarms with loungers and bathers; children making palaces of sand and seaweed; young men on surfboards; family parties picnicking under striped umbrellas; groups eating rice balls and drinking tea in the banner-bedecked pavilions — a typical vacation beach anywhere. But, stretching endlessly beyond these frivolous vacationers, the serious business of the sea goes on. The fishermen go out in the early morning in their heavy boats, and return in the late afternoon. And at evening the community gathers to watch them haul their rust-colored nets in from the green sea, to admire the kaleidoscopic sparkle and gleam of the silver and blue fish as they writhe on the dark sand.

At night 'Coney Island' offers the enticements of Japanese jazz; shooting galleries with bobbing ducks; booths in which you may pursue goldfish with a paper scoop which dissolves in your hand as soon as it touches the water, but which brings the fish back alive by the dozen when flipped by the proprietor. At night, beyond this glittering

centre, on the dark fringes, more serious things go on. Under a flaring gas jet, small boys squat in a solemn circle awaiting their turn for the wrestling. The referee, a tall gentleman in a gray kimono, makes signals with a black fan, obeying the rules of the judo ring as meticulously as though the contestants were the great topknotted ones of the Tokyo arena. The small serious black-eyed youngsters, naked except for a loincloth, stamp furiously on the sand with bent knees in a formless imitation of their betters, and, when the match is over, receive as prize a blue-patterned scrap of white cotton cloth folded in tissue.

At night, the community assembles on the flat black sand to dance the Odori, in a triple circle of old and young, kimonoed arms waving, sandaled bare feet advancing and retreating, while flute and drum or a cracked victrola record marks a continuous rhythm, and an occasional whoop or snatch of song or clapping of hands accentuates the beat. Tochi and I hover on the outskirts of the onlookers, both of us dying to join the ring and both equally self-conscious: Tochi, because as an intellectual, brought up in a Christian-Japanese family, she has never taken part in any of these community affairs; I, because I know that my gestures will be angular where the Japanese are soft and flowing, because I know that without the mystery of the clinging kimono and the long fluttery sleeves the Odori will be simple calisthenics. At night, during the Obon season, the fishermen light candles in small paper lanterns which singly or in clusters flowering all over a bamboo frame drift softly out across the almost motionless black sea.

Mr. Nikko comes to call. We sit in our living room, which overlooks the roofs of the gay community on the shore. Some thirty feet down the beach from us is a bamboo pavilion perhaps twelve feet high, with a platform at the top under an arched roof. In the centre of the platform is a victrola, and all day long, from 6 A.M. on, Japanese gather there, sitting upon straight chairs, and solemnly listen to records scratching out 'Oh, the Moon Shines Bright on Little Redwing' and 'M-A-R-Y, Mary, I Love You,' the most popular one of the lot. They think they are imbibing American culture, and perhaps they are. Mr. Nikko

listens for an hour, politely making conversation. Tactfully he leads the conversation from temples to restaurants. Have we tried those delicious Atami crabs? No? Then we must come at once. His car is outside. We shall like the little restaurant. And if we are fond of music he will call the geisha and they will sing for us and play the samisen.

SALT MARSH SWEEP

THE tide was ebbing furiously, impatient to leave the malodorous, viscid mud banks of the tortuous creeks and return to the cool, clean ocean. Areas of thatch appeared gradually above the receding water, and scattered salt haycocks were no longer dumpy islands, but brown warts on a glistening plain.

A yellow sun gazed languidly down upon lengthy reaches of salt marsh which straggle along the northern shore of Massachusetts. In places the marsh clings close to the ocean, a narrow strip of alternate land and sea. Other sectors bite deeply into the coast line, driving inland for miles, finally to butt ineffectually against some adamant barrier that defies further encroachment. Recession of the great ice cap has left many relics of its passing, and the Atlantic has whittled its way into the coast for centuries. These extensive marshes are outposts of its incessant war with land; interminably they reach farther into the continent and the bordering beach follows them. Other parts of the beach, however, have inched seaward instead of retreating, owing to the character of adjacent currents.

When gardens are sere, and black frost has spread its devastating chill in the air, the marshes harbor recurrent waves of migratory waterfowl. Then it is that the barren spaces arouse the hunters' interest for a few weeks. Otherwise the terrain is no-man's-land, except for casual visits of farmers bent on cropping salt hay. There is a wild beauty about the place; yet, during the warmer months, it is more satisfying from a distance. Close at hand it is marred by odor and insects. Birds, however, care nothing for insect pests. In fact, their presence is a boon to the avian tribe, for mosquitoes and green flies serve to keep the

marshes inviolate for the feathered clan that swarms over them. Other birds prefer the firm sand which fringes the southern part of this territory. Farther north, beaches are replaced by rugged headlands of ancient granite and sienite.

Only a person interested in birds would penetrate into these insect-ridden marshes in spring or summer. For those who are interested in ornithology, the effort is well worth the making, as there is a wealth of material to observe on beach, marsh, and bordering mainland. Birds from several zones nest in this county, and the beach offers unusual migrants and casual visitors. Very little housekeeping is done on the marsh, except at the edge, where sharp-tailed sparrows, savanna sparrows, spotted sandpipers, and meadow larks hazard occasional flood tides.

The Collector and I began one of our periodical pilgrimages on a sullen June day. Our first objective was the beach. Through one of the serpentine creeks we threaded toward it in a rowboat, multiplying, perforce, the distance as a crow flies by ten. Night herons were feeding along the smaller creeks, and as we rounded an abrupt corner we startled a great blue heron from its contemplation of a likely mud flat. While we beached the boat, a flock of turnstones twisted past, and a lone spotted sandpiper scuttled across the sand. We did not expect to see many shore birds, for most of them had already left — not to return in force until late July. Only two of the *Limicolæ* remain to breed upon the beach, the piping plover and the spotted sandpiper.

A strong easterly had been blowing for several days, so the beach was replete with marine life. Finger sponges, brittle stars, sea urchins, and sand dollars were abundant. In gouts of seaweed along the shore green crabs clustered, some interred limply, others pugnaciously active.

Leaving the boat where it was, we started back across the marsh on foot. Greater yellowlegs whistled musically in the thatch and occasionally we saw a pectoral sandpiper. Around the sloughs semipalmated and least sandpipers probed busily for food. Where marsh joins upland, there is a border of the rush called black grass. Here, too, are windrows of thatch and grass cast high by winter tides. Savanna and sharp-tailed

sparrows choose this locality in which to build cleverly hidden nests. A casual observer seldom sees the birds, for they are adept at concealing themselves in the grass.

We arrived at one of the terminal areas after an hour's trip across the marsh. On a near-by staddle, a kingbird sat screaming at our intrusion into its hunting domain; and in the underbrush just beyond the edge of the marsh a cock pheasant 'raaaaawked.' No savanna sparrows were in evidence, but we did hear the hissing song of a sharp-tail. In the space of half an hour we found the nest. It was elevated about six inches above the ground as a protection against full noon tides. Salt grass formed an arch over the five eggs, and the nest was carefully made of fine soft grasses, deeply cupped.

Later, cool green woods beyond the marsh beckoned, so we left the salt meadows for higher ground. Half a mile back from the marsh we found a pleasant fresh-water stream churning contentedly over brown tree roots. We followed its banks for a while, then left them to climb a pine-covered knoll where a vireo was singing. Behind the rise we came upon a miniature valley of hard sand, dappled with outcroppings of clay. Neither bushes nor grass grew upon its surface; it was a bare, yellow-gray gash in a setting of green. Here, sometime in the past, there had been an Indian camp site or workshop, for evidence of the fact was on every side. The sand was covered with chips, cores, and spalls — remnants of implement manufacture. We went over the site carefully and found several perfect arrowheads, a spearhead, and three scrapers.

The sun indicated that midafternoon had passed. We circled back to the marsh and started across it once more in the direction of our boat. A strong breeze had arisen and was rippling the thatch; at the same time it afforded us blessed relief from insatiable mosquitoes. Herons and yellowlegs were still plentiful, and a lone killdeer called shrilly.

It was late when we reached the boat and rowed back to the car. The twilight flight of a night-heron legion had begun; numbers of the birds winged heavily over the marsh and along the beach in a southerly direction toward a large heronry.

So passed another day into the limbo of time.

The CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

Owen Lattimore (p. 1) is an American who writes with authority about the frontiers beyond the Great Wall of China. Now in his thirty-seventh year, he has spent more than half his lifetime in the Orient; he speaks Chinese, Mongolian, and the attending dialects, and has traveled widely and daringly in Turkestan, Manchuria, and Mongolia. He is the capable editor of *Pacific Affairs*, the author of five books about the past and present of China, and, last but not least, the only white man who ever visited the sanctuary of Chingghis Khan and there participated in the Birthday Celebration.

The son of Baron Carnock, **Harold Nicolson** (p. 11) was for twenty years in the British Diplomatic Service, where his appointments placed him on familiar terms with the Continent and the Near East. The husband of V. Sackville-West, he is an author and critic in his own right. Of his thirteen volumes, we remember most vividly *Byron: The Last Journey*; *Lord Carnock*; *Peace-making*; and *Dwight Morrow*. His paper, 'The Meaning of Prestige,' will be published in book form by the Cambridge University Press in association with the Macmillan Company.

Readers in quest of new talent will do well to keep an eye on **William Maxwell** (p. 20). His first novel, *Bright Center of Heaven*, was published in 1934. His second, *They Came Like Swallows*, was selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club this spring. Born and bred in Illinois, he now makes his home in New York City, serving in an editorial capacity on that most Manhattan of magazines, the *New Yorker*.

Laird Bell (p. 23) is a practising lawyer of Chicago and a partner in the firm of Bell, Boyd and Marshall.

Harvard graduate, teacher of English at Dartmouth and Brown, biographer of Conrad and editor of the works of Stephen Crane, **Wilson Follett** (p. 32) reminds us of a brilliant American, Ambrose Bierce, who is insufficiently appreciated to this day.

That the urge of kleptomania is irresistible our **Anonymous** (p. 43) contributor bears witness. That the disease is closely identified with an unstable nervous condition seems evident from the indisputable evidence in this particular case.

Poet, Pulitzer Prize winner, teacher of English Composition and Versification, **Robert Hillyer** (p. 50) has recently been elevated to the Boylston Chair of Rhetoric at Harvard University—a chair formerly occupied by Charles Townsend Copeland and before him by a line of worthies ranging from Dean L. B. R. Briggs to John Quincy Adams. In accepting Mr. Hillyer's poem the Editor wrote:

In all your epistolary rhymes, I find none happier than here — no portraiture more just, no friendship expressed with more natural grace. Against it I can only urge that there are some who have not Harvard to look back to, and — if we may believe it — to whom the names of Briggs, Wendell, and Copey are unknown or quite forgotten. It took a number of years to rescue the *Atlantic* from the charge of parochialism, and I am wary, of course, of the dangers of too local an enthusiasm. But the thing is so good in itself that I must take it, and will do so.

Born at the turn of the century, **Jean Prévost** (p. 55) now wields as vigorous a free lance as any in Paris. Novelist, poet, epicurean, sociologist, and critic — in these and other guises he contributes to the *Nouvelle Revue Française* and *Paris-soir*. His paper has been translated by Howard C. Rice, a member of the French Department at Harvard University.

On a recent trip through Germany, **An American Professor** (p. 59), himself a lifelong admirer of the German people, observed what happens to those who resent the yoke of dictatorship.

A poet with four volumes of verse under her signature, **Winifred Welles** (p. 65) is now at work upon a book about her childhood in Norwich Town, Connecticut.

Director of the Research Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, **Professor George R. Harrison** (p. 69) illustrates the many and welcome contributions which physics can make to the farm.

James Gould Cozzens (p. 81) made his first contribution to the *Atlantic* while he was still a student at Kent. Now a novelist with eight well-read books to his credit, he tells us of a July day differing in some respects from the oratorical effects of the Fourth.

Equally at home in London or Philadelphia, **Logan Pearsall Smith** (p. 92) is an American

The COLUMN

man of letters whose style and scholarship most Englishmen respect.

Of Russian ancestry, **Sonia Raiziss** (p. 99) was born in Leipzig, Germany, in 1906. Philadelphia became her foster home early in her childhood, and it was there that she began her studies. She took her B. S. at the University of Pennsylvania, her M. A. at Columbia, and then went on to the Sorbonne where she did special work under the guidance of Professor Cestre. She is now the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship for Creative Writing.

An American and a Roman Catholic, **Pierre Crabitès** (p. 101) has presided for more than a quarter of a century as judge of the Mixed Tribunal at Cairo, Egypt. When he speaks of Palestine, he speaks with a knowledge of races and a love of peace. The author of a number of volumes (the latest of which, *Unhappy Spain*, was published in the spring of this year), Judge Crabitès is at present a special lecturer on law at the Louisiana State University.

For most of us, strawberries mean graduation exercises, hot audiences, and pink ice cream, but for **Della T. Lutes** (p. 108), author of *The Country Kitchen*, they have a very special meaning.

Herbert Dingle (p. 116) is Assistant Professor of Astrophysics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London.

It is marketing controls such as have figured in the recent history of copper that encourage offsetting government controls, maintains **H. B. Elliston**, Financial Editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*, in the Financial Column.

✓ ✓ ✓

Those who recall Professor Leacock's contribution to the December Atlantic will read the following with mixed feelings.

Dear Atlantic, —

You remember 'My Fishpond'? The outraged God of Ponds took vengeance on my scoffing. The ice carried away the whole 'damned' pond! When it went out a trout was found!!!

STEPHEN LEACOCK
Orillia, Ontario

'The same old individualist exploitation we find in America.'

Dear Atlantic, —

I was much interested in Mr. Chew's article in your February number entitled, 'Save America First,' but I must take exception to his analysis of the soil conservation problem in China. The conclusion that pressure of population has forced the

Chinese to cut their forests and cultivate easily eroded hill land is not a correct generalization. To quote from the article: 'Recent investigations do not bear out the idea that the Chinese destroyed their forests and allowed their soils to wash away through ignorance. . . . But what could the Chinese do, when between 1743 and 1920 their population increased nearly threefold? There was only one thing possible, since they were confirmed individualists — to push cultivation up the mountains.'

This picture of a dense population being forced to utilize every bit of available land, even though realizing the consequences, is not true to the facts. In the loessial regions of northern China and in the Yangtze Valley, Mr. Chew's observations may hold, but not for large areas of central and southern China. There, in an area roughly equal to the whole of our American Southern States, the population is largely confined to the river deltas and valleys. Cultivation has not been pushed up the hillsides even though the people could well afford to utilize much of this hill land. There is no evidence to show that vast areas of this type of land have ever been used for agriculture.

In Kwangtung Province, approximately the size of the state of Georgia, and with a quite similar climate, the Chinese farmer has no conception of the value of land conservation. Some 75 per cent of the land area is literally waste land, owing to the destructive practices of the farmers. First the forests are cut down, then the farmer from the valley sets fire to the hillsides in the belief that his lowland paddy fields will be fertilized by the ash washed down from above. I stood on Loh Fau Mountain at four thousand feet elevation last fall and saw smoke rising from hundreds of acres of hill land. These fires burn off the tree reproduction and much of the shrubby and herbaceous vegetation, with resulting widespread erosion. The consequences of such practices are not considered at all. I would say that the Tennessee mountaineer who cultivates corn on 80 per cent slopes with the knowledge that he will have to move somewhere else in a few years because of soil erosion is much less ignorant of the situation than the Chinese peasant. Yet Mr. Chew would tell us that the Chinese regret the necessity of doing this while the Americans do not.

In this connection the Chinese farmers have seldom been 'good foresters' as Mr. Chew suggests. While Lowdermilk may have seen some forest practices here and there in central China, and it is true that the monks have preserved small forested areas around their monasteries, the Chinese is no more a conservator of the forest than the American. In southern China, in marked contrast to Chinese practices, the aboriginal tribes who have moved in from Indo-China and Siam do carry on a simple form of forestry and raise lumber for the market. The Chinese who live near these tribes have taken over their practices to a certain extent.

The Chinese people are individualists like the Americans. Over much of their country it has not been population pressure which has caused land denudation and soil erosion, but the same old individualist exploitation and destructive practices which we find in America.

DONALD D. STEVENSON
Lingnan University, Canton, China

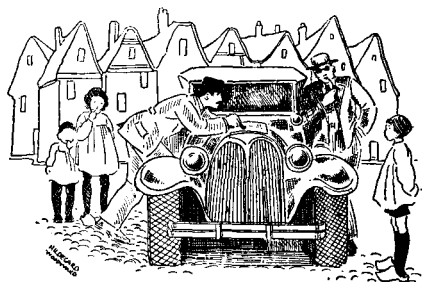
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By DONALD MOFFAT

This is the journal of a young New York girl who married an American painter and who went with him to live "down East." They found an old house on an island, and not too far off the shore. After many misgivings, they bought the place for song, sailed into the anchorage on their boat, and lived aboard ship until the house was habitable.

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On Gilbert Head MAINE DAYS

By ELIZABETH ETNIER

to be published July 26th

The Atlantic BOOKSHELF



A Guide to Good Books

WHILE he was still in college Kenneth Roberts began to write, and he has never stopped. As editor of the *Cornell Widow*, he gravitated to the *Boston Post*. His humor as a columnist attracted the attention of *Puck*, and thence it was but a step up to the editorial sanctum of *Life*. In 1919 he became Staff Correspondent of the *Saturday Evening Post*. But as soon as his pen was a free lance, he returned to Maine and began the writing of those historical novels which have by now endeared him to so many Americans.

Northwest Passage, by Kenneth Roberts

[Doubleday, Doran, \$2.75]

KENNETH ROBERTS in *Northwest Passage* summons to life out of the neglected pages of American history the figure of a man who was the epitome of that witless and unheeding form of courage called valor, which may be folly but which is nevertheless an ennobling thing to see and to record. The book is built around Major Robert Rogers as seen through the eyes of Langdon Towne, who strove to catch in pale pastels the portrait of a nation still unborn, and who could shoot an Indian as easily as a slow-flying partridge and feel an equal pleasure in the act.

But Major Rogers is the heart of the book. In him the man met the occasion. He was one of those individuals able to multiply himself; to make out of ordinary men his own duplicates, fit to endure what he endured and to achieve what he achieved. Whether he led his Rangers against the St. Francis Indians, or home again against the odds of nature and of man; whether he sought the King's ear in London, or rattled his chains in a log cell at Michilimackinac, or guzzled in Fleet Prison, he was always the master of his scene. No man can walk for twenty-odd days through the New England wilderness in October with a bullet through his ribs; but with Rogers to lead him, Captain Ogden did. Men cannot march for days through waist-

deep swamp with nothing to eat but a handful of corn; but with Rogers to lead them, and Indians behind them to lay a red-hot axe blade between scalp and skull if they lagged, the Rangers did.

Northwest Passage is a great historical document, which historians will acclaim; but it is much more than that. It is a great novel, since in its pages an era comes to life, complete with people and with things. Jonas Hight, the print seller, is as vivid as the stinking rabbit pie which the Board of Overseers at Harvard served in Commons in 1759. Mr. Roberts's Indians kill and are killed in a bloody butchery without palliation, untainted by Cooper's pale sentimentality. Stoodley's Tavern served lobsters and ale that even in cold type can be tasted; and the flip that Captain Carver and Captain Tute made out of rum and beer flavored with cinnamon and stirred with a hot poker will dizzy the reader's senses.

The book is full of good eating and drinking and fighting; but most of all it is full of living people. John Singleton Copley, who let the vices of his countrymen blind him to their greater virtues. High Sheriff Thomas Packer, the man who hanged Ruth Blay. Jennie Coit, the white girl rescued from the Indians, who left her rescuers to go shamelessly back to Indian loves again. Ben Franklin and William Hogarth and Edmund Burke and all that pleasant company at Doctor Campbell's London dinner table, who when they were fed to the chins demanded that Rogers tell them how it felt to starve; and who propounded the conundrum, 'Why is Doctor Johnson's conversation like a lady's leg?' Natty Potter, whose only virtue was that he had a daughter; and Ann Potter, and the brave beauty of her love for Langdon Towne. And scores besides; but most of all, Major Robert Rogers, whether in triumph or disgrace still towering over other men.

Here is a book that cannot be easily and briefly 'reviewed.' It is too big. Cap Huff's hot buttered rum was a drink so potent and enduring that a full evening of it would stay with you as long as a coonskin cap. *Northwest Passage* is a book that will stay with you even longer. When Kenneth Roberts wrote *Arundel*, he produced a novel which for most writers would have been a culmination. In *Rabble in Arms*, and to-day in *Northwest Passage*, he has proved that *Arundel* was no more than a promise now bountifully fulfilled.

BEN AMES WILLIAMS

Hart Crane: The Life of an American Poet, by Philip Horton

[Norton, \$3.00]

It would be difficult to conceive a more tragic and wretched and in many ways sordid story than Mr. Philip Horton gives us in his life of Hart Crane; and it is greatly to Mr. Horton's credit that out of comparatively eventless materials, and with a central character who by no conceivable stretch of the imagination can be called sympathetic, he has written an admirable and very moving biography. When Hart Crane, not yet thirty-three, ended his life by drowning five years ago,

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it may be said that he not only ended a bankrupt personal dream or vision, but the bankrupt dream of a whole generation as well. It was an era of spurious violences, spurious mysticisms, spurious esotericisms; an era of easy and lazy short cuts; above all, an era of a kind of specious spaciousness, a spaciousness which was as little founded in thought as it was in education. If Harry Crosby, a belated *fin de siècle enfant terrible*, was its *reductio ad absurdum*, with his dreary little coterie of 'black sun' worshippers, Hart Crane was its genius.

Perhaps pseudo-genius? It is much too soon to say. Mr. Horton does not scruple to use the adjective 'great' of Crane's achievement, nor is he by any means without sound critical support. And that Crane had a kind of power, both of imagination and of phrase, is without question. Superb lines, superb images, fine groups of lines; here and there, as in the Mississippi River section of *The Bridge*, a whole poetic movement of great beauty; but what is everywhere apparent also, and increasingly apparent as Crane grew older, is the failure of the substructure to hold together, either formally or conceptually. He had, it is true, an explicit aesthetic in defense of this: he claimed the privileges of a pre-logical and associational and purely affective kind of poetic statement, carried to an extreme of subjectivism; but it may well be questioned whether this was not an *ex post facto* rationalization of what had become an essentially destructive bad habit. Good 'nonsense,' as M. Cammaerts has pointed out, is an important ingredient in all good poetry; but *great* poetry, except of the most fragmentary sort, and perhaps decadent as well, cannot be built of nonsense alone.

Crane was a neurotic, a profoundly disequibrated soul, and he had a really extraordinary talent; but he lacked the will or the courage to discipline his talent, indulged its weaknesses to excess, whipped up his failing associational powers with alcohol, and came inevitably to the point at which they were exhausted. Arrived there, he found, of course, that he had no intellectual centre, and no core of conviction, left. Intellectually and spiritually, he died with his failure to synthesize the architecture of *The Bridge*, his finest poem; and this he knew. His death by suicide three years later was simply the posthumous death of a poet who had lost his way, and become a hollow man, a man without beliefs.

CONRAD AIKEN



Pedlar's Progress, by Odell Shepard

[Little, Brown, \$3.50]

IN 1929 Professor Shepard published an elaborate historical study, *The Lore of the Unicorn*. If he was looking later for another extreme of individuality, he could not have chosen a better topic than Amos Bronson Alcott. In these later days of debunking, Alcott could hardly have found a more sympathetic biographer. The

warmth of his appreciation of the best in Alcott's philosophy and life might even excite an occasional suspicion of rebunking. This, however, would be a distortion of what after all is a matter of approach and emphasis.

Note, for example, the uses to which Professor Shepard puts Louisa May Alcott's story of the Fruitlands experiment in her 'Transcendental Wild Oats.' Freely as he draws upon it at many points, he does not employ its concluding anecdote — the story of Alcott's remarking as a frostdriven apple fell from a tree while he and his shivering family were quitting their forlorn red farmhouse, 'Poor Fruitlands! The name was as great a failure as the rest!' — and of his wife's antiphonal word, 'Don't you think Apple Slump would be a better name for it?'

Now 'Apple Slump' would have been as good a title for an ironic account of Alcott as *Pedlar's Progress* is for this more sanguine recital. Professor Shepard chose — perhaps by his very nature was bound to choose — the sympathetic approach to his subject. He had, among Alcott's contemporaries, such fellow partisans as Emerson and Thoreau. For another 'school of thought' the elder Henry James spoke with his customary directness when he told Alcott to his face, 'You are an egg half hatched. The shells are yet sticking about your head.' On the Exchange of Transcendentalism, Alcott could never have been quoted merely at par: he would have stood at least at 150. Had Professor Shepard held him at quite so high a valuation he would not have provided the skeptical with so many missiles for critical target practice. The absurdities and humors of an astonishing existence might have been turned to formidable account. Here the benign sway of Alcott's nature has tempered judgment with mercy. It must be felt, besides, that the example of prolixity in Alcott's interminable talk and journalizing has had its effect in a diffuseness of narration that carries the book beyond its essential length.

Such, in general, are one's reservations with regard to the book. Its merits call for even more definite recognition. One of them lies in the success with which Professor Shepard has illustrated, by means of the Alcott story, the 'assured conviction' which he declares in his opening sentence — 'that America has always been, is now, and throughout her coming centuries will continue to be, profoundly idealistic.' With recurring emphasis he keeps the reader aware that Alcott was precisely as typical of one aspect of American character as Franklin and John D. Rockefeller were of others. He is equally successful in reconstructing that strange background of American society in the three decades before the Civil War, from which an Alcott could step, quite naturally, into the foreground of Transcendentalism. His impulses towards the planting of Edens seem to have sprung from a purity and simplicity of spirit worthy almost of Adam before the fall. The reconciliation of theory and practice troubled him not in the very least. His two attempts at dealing with practical matters — at his Temple School and in the Fruitlands experiment — met with failure so disastrous that nothing but Alcott's total lack of humor could have rendered his

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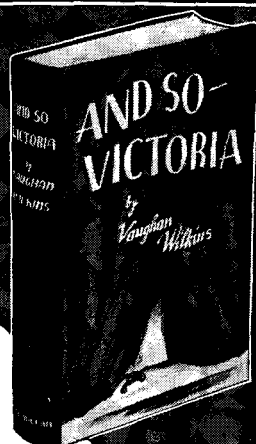
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recovery possible. There was an accompanying lack of responsibility in financial matters which would have been unbelievable in a world of fact had not Wilkins Micawber and Harold Skimpole, in the world of fiction, been Alcott's contemporaries.

It is the virtue of Professor Shepard's narrative that all these incredibilities are made to seem credible. He takes his 'Pedlar' more nearly at his own valuation as a philosopher than many others can be expected to do. If he had quoted Alcott's self-confident question to Emerson, 'If Pythagoras came to Concord, whom would he ask to see?' his case would have been no easier to make. Yet in his unhurried offering and interpreting of a vast garnering of information he does bring Alcott, his contemporaries, and their ideas to life, and gives them a distinctive place in the true picture of nineteenth-century America. In this achievement alone there is abundant occasion for gratitude.

M. A. DEWOLFE HOWE

LIFE IN LETTERS

The Letters of Fanny Brawne to Fanny Keats edited by Fred Edgcombe (Oxford University Press, \$3.00) are of personal rather than of literary value. In the thirty-one letters which Keats's beloved wrote to his young sister Fanny nothing is learned of the poet that was not previously known but for the one fact that he held a high opinion of Charles Lamb as a writer of essays. The story of his voyage to Italy in search of health and of his anguished months in Rome has been told again and again, first by Joseph Severn, the companion of his last days, and later by Colvin, Amy Lowell, and other students and biographers of Keats. Nothing new of material interest is established by the present letters; nothing is advanced that in any way alters our estimate of the poet. Yet the letters are important because they are at last a vindication of Fanny Brawne against the century-old maligning begun by a group of Keats partisans and continued through the years by biographers too ready to accept tradition. Amy Lowell, who had access to Fanny Brawne's letters while writing her life of *John Keats*, was enabled by her research to paint the young girl sympathetically. Even Miss Lowell, however, was not wholly unprejudiced.

Among manuscripts relative to Keats in the Morgan Library, there is an unpublished letter by John Hamilton Reynolds, a friend of the poet's, to Mr. Taylor, his publisher. It is dated the 21st of September, 1820, a week after Keats had sailed for Italy and death. 'Absence from the poor idle thing of womankind to whom he has so unaccountably attached himself, will not be an ill thing,' he writes, referring to Fanny Brawne. She knew of his dislike for her. She also knew that the Misses Reynolds, his sisters, were equally inimical for the simple reason that Keats had chosen her rather than one of them. It is a relief to learn more than a hundred years

later that Fanny was not unaware of their malice and that she could warn Keats's sister against them. 'My dear Fanny,' she wrote in November 1821, 'if you live to the age of Methusalem and I die tomorrow never be intimate with the Reynolds. . . . Every day I live I find out more of their malice against me.' She must have been grievously hurt.

On the whole the letters reveal an intelligent, sensible, forthright girl of ordinary attainments but with a more than ordinary sense of justice. Although she never liked George, Keats's brother, she could defend him against the doubts of his sister and even strove to justify what Keats's biographers have never forgiven — his taking Keats's money for an unsound investment when the poet was in direst need. The most gratifying thing of all, however, is to learn that Fanny Brawne had a just estimate of the man who loved her. 'Is it to be borne that he, formed for every thing good, and, I think I dare say it, for every thing great, is to give up his hopes of life and happiness?' It is no 'idle thing of woman-kind' who here all unwittingly writes her defense for posterity.

In 1833 when the *Quarterly Review* noticed the poems of Hartley Coleridge, it quoted the old saying that the oakling withers beneath the shadow of the oak. Samuel Taylor Coleridge had a few months more to live: Hartley Coleridge, his firstborn and favorite, had just given proof that he, too, had something of genius. The *Letters of Hartley Coleridge*, edited by Grace Evelyn Griggs and Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford University Press, \$5.00), reveal the oakling as still in the shadow of the oak, a shadow from which he was never to escape. Hartley himself recognized this. 'My dear Father's greatness is not only too large for my comprehension,' he wrote three years after Coleridge's death, 'but in some parts too high for my apprehension — not that I cannot understand him, but I cannot realize many of his ideas.' He was never to realize them. Able poet and critic though he was in his own right, his limited talents were nearer to those of his uncle Robert Southey than to his father.

The letters begin appropriately with 'Poetry on an Ass' which Hartley wrote at the age of ten and which his fond parent improved in metre and moral. One smiles on remembering an earlier poem 'To a Young Ass' written by an ardent Pantisocrat of twenty-two. Alas, there were to be more points of resemblance between father and son, as revealed in the letters of 1820 when Hartley, in disgrace at Oriel, was to repeat Coleridge's flight from Jesus College. The facts of Hartley's loss of his fellowship have been known these many years. What has not been known, and what the letters here make clear, is Hartley's honorable behavior throughout a scandal that was to affect the rest of his life by depriving him of the only security that would have stabilized his restive genius. The appendix includes fragments of letters which Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote to the college authorities in his son's defense.

Of the ninety-six letters in the volume the majority are addressed to his brother Derwent and to his mother

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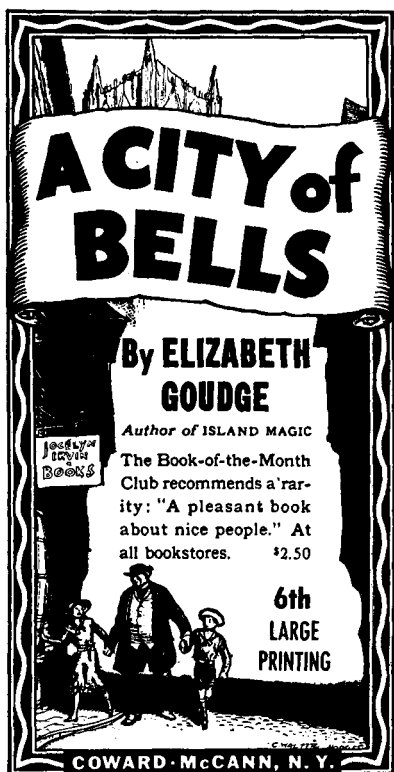
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by HENRI LICHTENBERGER

Translated and Edited by
KOPPEL S. PINSON

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The half dozen to his father, especially those of 1820, reveal him respectful, affectionate, contrite and — again a reminiscence of the elder Coleridge — full of promises of betterment. From 1820 onward the writing assumes a maturity that was lacking before. Here and there a sudden glimpse of imagery or a turn of phrase evokes the greater Coleridge. Hartley is most charming, however, when he is himself, writing to young Derwent and later to his mother with her understandable preoccupation over his socks and trousers, his handkerchiefs and neckcloths. Here, in her son's letters, better even than in her own, one sees how Sara Fricker could have become Dorothy Wordsworth's *Mrs. C*.

The editors have done a needful work in linking the letters with biographical paragraphs. One might wish that for the uninitiated they had appended explanatory notes on the fascinating pet names that abounded in the Southey circle — Snouderumpater, for example, and Namput, and the irresistible Snifterbreeches. Finally, this reviewer expresses a humble prayer that the editors devote themselves to the future publication of those letters which they have not included in the present volume.

FRANCES WINWAR

Bugles Blow No More, by Clifford Dowdey

[Atlantic Monthly Press and Little, Brown, \$2.50]

IF Mr. Dowdey had given us a little more of the Virginian domestic background before the War between the States, his novel might be fairly described as a miniature *War and Peace*. It is all war without any peace at all. The merit of the book is, as I shall show, adequate, but the upheaval of the war remains at the end a little obscure. We are never shown just what it is that has been overturned: Mrs. Wade, the spoiled 'aristocrat,' seems to represent the old order, yet in failing to give her more depth, and in limiting her sensibility to fear for the loss of her material possessions, Mr. Dowdey has refused to write a serious work of fiction, and has given us instead a spectacle of Richmond in the grip of war.

A great deal of historical research has gone into the making of the texture of this novel. There is no one, I am convinced, who knows quite as much as Mr. Dowdey knows about the 'social history' of Richmond from 1861 to 1865. He has worked out in detail the relation between the public event and the private emotion: the structure of his book is a relentless parallel drawn between the two realms of experience, and I am sure that no other Southern novelist has a better grasp of this difficulty.

But Mr. Dowdey in the long run is swamped by his historical knowledge. The individual scenes are often most effective — the exciting Secession Night, the first gunboat battle at Drewry's Bluff, the reception of the news of victory at First Manassas in the government offices, the Bread Riot, and, best of all, the burning of Richmond followed by the moral collapse of the surrender. But there is no climax: Mr. Dowdey is dominated by public events and their mere chronology, and the book is largely a series of minor crises that fail to

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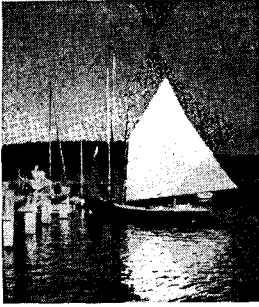
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develop. If Mr. Dowdey had concentrated his attention upon one main event as the focus of the domestic action, he might have achieved greater clarity and drama in the domestic plot, which here tends to be frittered away in its public counterpart of war.

The characters, with two exceptions, seem to me never to come to life: Virginius Kirby, the aging lawyer who becomes a war clerk, is Mr. Dowdey's mouthpiece for critical commentary upon the progress of events, but he is a real character, and his suicide (modeled upon the example of Edmund Ruffin) is intensely dramatic in its implications; likewise, Brose Kirby, his nephew and the 'hero' of the novel, comes to life toward the end, and his dazed return to Richmond after the surrender, when he can only remember that he has touched Lee's stirrup, is so good that one regrets that it is not better.

Mr. Dowdey is not a realist, or, if he is, the realism is Sir Walter Scott's—a close attention to historical detail. The 'love story' is the conventional high-born lady and the fascinating commoner who are raised by events greater than themselves to a dignity that neither knew before. Mr. Dowdey brings to the war no new interpretation. He feels, with a great many Virginians, that it was all a horrid nuisance foisted upon Virginia by incomprehensible persons from South Carolina and Mississippi, whom he dislikes almost as intensely as the Yankees whom he unhesitatingly calls 'foreigners.' If a Virginian cannot be a Southerner, it is well for him to be, like Mr. Dowdey, a Virginian.

ALLEN TATE

EVERY publisher dreams of the time when he will be able to produce a new full-length volume for as little as fifty cents. Then he thinks he will attract those millions of readers who to-day would not pay two dollars and a half for Shakespeare, the Bible, and the *Decameron* all rolled into one. Simon and Schuster have made an earnest endeavor by publishing a new cloth-bound novel, *The Outward Room*, by Millen Brand, at \$1.25. To break even at this price, they were compelled to publish the book in an edition of 140,000 copies. It is my private guess that their next novel by Millen Brand will be restored to the customary \$2.50 level.

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